00080192

THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY
TOWN HALL, BOMBAY-400 023.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 17 February, 2016

2
C
1

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE LITERATURE

OF

THE FINE ARTS.

CONTRIBUTIONS

TO

THE LITERATURE

OF THE

FINE ARTS.

80192
aC

BY

CHARLES LOCK EASTLAKE, R.A.

&c. &c.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
1848.

01.18
EOS/Cm
80192

00080192

THIS VOLUME

IS

Inscribed

TO

THE RIGHT HON. SIR ROBERT PEEL, BART.

&c. &c. &c.

BY

THE EDITOR.

PREFACE.

If the number of books which we possess on the Fine Arts is to be taken as the measure of our knowledge or our taste for painting and sculpture, the standard, as compared with that of other countries, must be admitted to be low; but if the theoretic soundness and practical utility of those which have appeared be taken into the account, we need not fear the comparison.

While I am not prepared to maintain that it is impossible to derive pleasure from works of art without possessing some critical knowledge, and agree with Lauzi, that the observation of Pliny — *de pictore sculptore et fusore judicare nisi artifex non potest* — must be understood of certain refinements of the art that escape the eye of the most learned critics, yet I think all will admit that the pleasure derived from painting and sculpture is increased by a knowledge of their principles, and especially as regards their province and capacity.

Reynolds observes: "To discover beauties, or to point out faults, in the works of celebrated masters, and to compare the conduct of one artist with another, is certainly no mean or inconsiderable part of criticism; but this is still no more than to know the art through the artist. This test of investigation must have two capital defects—it must be narrow, and it must be uncertain. To enlarge the boundaries of the art of painting, as well as to fix its principles, it will be necessary that *that* art and *those* principles should be considered in their correspondence with the principles of the other arts, which, like this, address themselves primarily and principally to the imagination. When those connected and kindred principles are brought together to be compared, another comparison will grow out of this; that is, the comparison of them all with those of human nature, from whence arts derive the materials upon which they are to produce effects. This, as it is the highest style of criticism, is at the same time the soundest."

A general notion seems to have prevailed, in this country at least, that speculation and action are almost inconsistent, and that the *sine quà non* for an artist is incessant practice. Although it must be admitted that if the artist is to select between practice and theory, there can be no

doubt as to which is best; yet it must also be admitted that this examination of the general principles relating to the Fine Arts must be beneficial even to artists. Reynolds observes: "That practice that is tolerable in its way is not totally blind; an imperceptible theory which grows out of, accompanies, and directs it, is never wholly wanting to a sedulous practice: but this goes but a little way with the painter merely, and is utterly inexplicable to others." This would seem at least as good a reason for teaching general readers the elements of criticism in the Fine Arts as for teaching the principles of ethics, or any other such branch of knowledge, which from time to time engages the attention of civilised nations, and surely must advance and assist the artist in his practice. There is a prevalent, though erroneous idea, that books relating to the theory of art are more likely to do harm than good to the artist. I shall again fortify my own view by that of Reynolds, who says, "By whatever studies criticism may gain ground, we need be under no apprehension that invention will ever be annihilated or subdued, or intellectual energy brought utterly within the restraint of written law. Genius will still have room to expatiate, and keep always at the same distance from narrow comprehension

and mechanical performance." It is erroneous to suppose that books on art are peculiar to modern times, and that no treatises appeared till the master-works of modern painting had been produced. In the fifteenth century, the voluminous works of Lorenzo Ghiberti, Leon Battista Alberti, and Leonardo da Vinci, were written, of which the last two have been published. Of works belonging to the same period, which still remain in MS., or which have been lost, there is a further list, by Pietro della Francesca, Francesco di Giorgio, Baldassar Peruzzi, Domenicho Ghirlandajo, and Raphael: Vasari alludes to the treatises of the last two; and to the above many others written in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries might be added. There is also a MS. of Filarete, a sculptor, of the fifteenth century, still preserved in Florence; and as regards technical matters, such as the work of Cennini (which has been published), the list is endless. Many of the writings quoted by Vasari were doubtless quoted by him from historical notices only; but the works to which we have access are sufficient to show that, both theoretically and practically, written information accompanied the progress of art during its best periods. The same observation holds good with respect to ancient art: and Pliny, like Vasari,

appears to have borrowed from writings which were extant in his time.

A great step has been made in a right direction by the establishment of the Fine Arts Commission. A new stimulus has been given to the production of works of painting and sculpture; artists of great merit have been either created or called into notice by the rewards offered; and the free admission to the exhibition of their productions has tended to extend the general interest of the public in works of art. Attention was first called to the probability that the building the new Houses of Parliament might be the means of advancing the Fine Arts by Mr. Hawes, who moved for a Parliamentary inquiry; and we are indebted to Sir Robert Peel both for the Commission, and the judicious selection of Mr. Eastlake as the secretary.

The papers of Mr. Eastlake, printed in the Appendix to the Reports of this Commission, have explained much as regards the condition and true objects of painting and sculpture, partly with reference to the general nature of these arts, and partly with reference to the particular application of painting to public buildings. Although these papers have to a certain extent become known to the public through the means of the Athenæum

and other journals, it occurred to me that it would be useful to collect them in a volume, and thus make them more generally accessible, especially as there were some other treatises of the same writer, which had appeared elsewhere, of equal value. On applying to Mr. Eastlake on this subject, he kindly undertook to revise these essays; and their publication is with his sanction.

Besides these papers, a fragment "On the Philosophy of the Fine Arts" is included. This, though begun some years since, has not hitherto been published.

As regards the papers reprinted from the Appendix to the Reports of the Fine Arts Commission, their value was fully admitted when they appeared. With respect to the paper on BASSO-RELIEVO, my own opinion of its merit is fully borne out by the testimony of the eminent sculptor Gibson, who observes, in a letter to me, — "The first time I read our friend Eastlake's essay on BASSO-RELIEVO was at Rome. I then thought, and I continue to think, that he has treated the subject more correctly and more learnedly than any other writer whom I have met with.

"To a sculptor this is a subject of great importance; and I think that the students in this country would derive much advantage from frequently and

carefully studying this essay, by which they would become more impressed with the necessity of adhering to the principles established by the Greeks for architectural decorations.

"It is the Elgin collection which has thrown light upon the subject of 'Basso-relievo;' and Eastlake has admirably demonstrated the principles of that branch of sculpture." I may add that Mr. Gibson has since stated to me, that he considered the paper on SCULPTURE quite as valuable and as important as that on "BASSO-RELIEVO."

In making this collection, I was glad to have an opportunity, in however humble a capacity, of connecting my own name with that of my friend. Though this is a matter in which the public have no interest, I trust the merits of the papers will be considered as a sufficient apology for my having induced Mr. Eastlake to revise, and Mr. Murray to publish, the present volume.

H. BELLENDEN KER.

CONTENTS.

PAGE

No. I.—The Fine Arts - - - - - - 1

II.—On the Criterion of Specific Style.—On the Scriptural and Legendary Subjects of the Middle Ages - - - - - - 7

III.—On the Origin of the Modern German School of Fresco Painting - - - - - 20

IV.—The State and Prospects of the English School, considered with reference to the Promotion of Art in connection with the Rebuilding of the Houses of Parliament 29

V.—Representation as distinguished from Description - - - - - - - 51

VI.—Sculpture - - - - - - - 61

VII.—Basso-Rilievo - - - - - - - 95

VIII.—Painting. Styles and Methods of Painting suited to the Decoration of Public Buildings - - - - - - - 125

IX.—Life of Raphael - - - - - - 180

X.—Notes from Kugler's Hand-Book. Note on the Subjects of the Paintings in the Cappella Sistina - - - - - - 272

XI.—Extracts from the Translation of Goethe's Theory of Colours - - - - - 288

XII.—On the Decoration of a Villa:—
Letter to Charles Lock Eastlake, Esq., R.A., &c., by H. B. K. - - - - - - - 325
Mr. Eastlake's Answer - - - - - 328

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE LITERATURE

OF

THE FINE ARTS.

No. I.

THE FINE ARTS.*

UNDER this term are comprehended those productions of human genius and skill which are more especially amenable to the decisions of taste. Of these creations, some have, from the first, been employed to embellish objects of mere utility; but all are, strictly speaking, independent of necessity, and, as regards their form and means, are addressed to the imagination. Their highest office is to meet ideas of beauty or sublimity, however acquired, by imitative or adequate representation, and by powers of expression essentially their own, to awaken the nobler sympathies.

The aptitude of the human mind for receiving such impressions, whether directly from nature or

* [This article, and the Essay on "Basso-rilievo," have been reprinted from the *Penny Cyclopædia*, by permission of Mr. C. Knight.—ED.]

through the medium of the Arts, depends greatly on cultivation, and on the leisure which supposes that first wants are satisfied; but there exists no state of society, however rude, in which the love of decoration and the sense of grandeur have not been recognised, and in which some attempts at corresponding realisations are not to be met with: the difference between such efforts and the most refined productions is a difference only in degree; the existence of the tendencies to which they owe their origin might be always taken for granted, and it would only remain to regulate their influence and direct their capabilities aright.

The Arts derive their chief interest from their twofold relation. They represent the impression of nature on human sympathies; her chosen attributes reflected through a human medium. Thus, while nations, like individuals, present ever-varying characteristics, art, as it expands into life, partakes of their diversities, and may be compared to the bloom of a plant, true to its peculiar developing causes, and originally modified by the soil from which it springs. In barbarous or degenerate nations, the sense of the beautiful has ever been manifested only in the lowest degree, while a false excitement, founded on the suppression of the feelings of nature, may be said to have usurped the place of the sublime. We may smile at the simple attempt of the savage to excite admiration by the gaudiness of his attire; but we should shudder to

contemplate the scenes which his fortitude or obduracy can invest with the seeming attributes of sublimity. The just value of life, the characteristic of that civilisation which reduces the defensive passions to their due limits, tends to elevate the sources of gratification, by pointing out the pleasures of the mind as distinguished from those of sense; and the perception of the beautiful is in its turn the cause, as it is in some degree the result, of the rational enjoyment of life.

The tendency of the Arts, when rightly exercised, to purify enjoyment, to humanise and regulate the affections, constitutes their noblest use, and indicates the connection between the higher objects of taste and moral influences; but it will at once be seen that this idea of usefulness is distinct from the ordinary meaning of the term as applicable to the productions of human ingenuity. A positive use results, indeed, indirectly, from the cultivation of the formative arts, in proportion as their highest powers are developed: for it will be found that at all times when accuracy of design has been familiar, and particularly when the human figure has been duly studied, the taste thus acquired from the source of the beautiful has gradually influenced various kinds of manufactures. Again, as illustrating science, the Fine Arts may be directly useful in the stricter sense; but this is not the application which best displays their nature and value. The essence of the Fine Arts begins where utility in its

narrower acceptation ends. The abstract character of ornament is, in that sense, to be useless. That this principle exists in nature we immediately feel, in calling to mind the merely beautiful appearances of the visible world, and particularly the colours of flowers. In every case in nature, where fitness or utility can be traced, the characteristic quality or *relative* beauty of the object is found to be identified with that fitness;—a union imitated as far as possible in the less decorative parts of architecture, furniture, &c.; but where no utility is found to exist save that of conveying rational delight and of exalting the mind by ideas of perfection, we recognise a more essential or *absolute* principle of beauty. The Fine Arts may be said to owe their existence to the human recognition of this principle. The question of their utility therefore resolves itself into the inquiry as to the intention of the beauties of nature. The agreeable facts of the external world have not only the general effect of adding a charm to existence, but they appeal to susceptibilities which are peculiarly human, and it becomes necessary to separate the instinctive feelings which we possess in common with the rest of the animate creation, from that undefinable union of sensibility and reflection which constitutes taste,—a principle, in a great measure, independent of the passions, yet calculated to connect the attractions of sense with higher impulses, by means of admiration. It is this last feeling which the Arts, in their essential

character, aspire to kindle, which not only elevates the beautiful, but reduces ideas of fear and danger to the lofty sentiment of the sublime, which teaches the relation of both to a still purer influence; a relation which it is the great privilege of Art, as the interpreter at once of nature and of thought, to embody.

It has been customary to refer all the Fine Arts to a principle of imitation: in one sense this can hardly be objected to, since all owe their satisfactory impression to a certain conformity to nature, and employ nature's principles of congruity and adaptation even where no direct reproduction of reality is apparent. But in a more literal sense, painting, sculpture, and the drama are the only imitative arts; poetry, music, and architecture, the creative arts: the distinction is easily applicable to the varieties of each class. It is scarcely necessary to add, that the Fine Arts are addressed to the two nobler senses only, and that the elements of beauty can be arrested by those arts alone which appeal to the sense of vision.

With regard to the classification of the Arts, according to their relative excellence, those are generally considered the most worthy in which the mental labour employed and the mental pleasure produced are greatest, and in which the manual labour, or labour of whatever kind, is least apparent. This test would justly place poetry first; but the criterion should not be incautiously applied;

for in architecture, where human ingenuity is most apparent, and even where the design is very simple, a powerful impression on the imagination may be excited from magnitude, proportion, or other causes. In such cases, however, it will be found that we lose sight of the laborious means in the absorbing impression of the effect, and the art thus regains its dignity. It would be an invidious as well as a very difficult task to assign the precise order of the various arts according to the above principle; but it may be remarked, that their union is a hazardous experiment, inasmuch as, from their different modes and materials, they depart in different degrees from nature. The incongruity here alluded to, is sometimes observable in attempts to combine the principles of sculpture and painting. The drama itself, which unites poetry with many characteristics of the formative arts, and with music, is in constant danger of violating the first principles of style, viz., the consistency of its conventions; and in the more intimate union, satisfactory as it often is, of poetry and music, the latter, though the inferior art, is too independent and too attractive to be a mere vehicle, and is commonly allowed to usurp the first place. In these instances the combination supposed is arbitrary: in some cases it is indispensable; but the general unfitness of an art to exhibit itself alone, without the aid of another art, betrays its absolute inferiority.

No. II.

ON THE CRITERION OF SPECIFIC STYLE. — ON THE SCRIPTURAL AND LEGENDARY SUBJECTS OF THE MIDDLE AGES.*

In tracing the history of painting and the different character of its schools, the unprejudiced observer may be struck with the fact, that an equal measure of the world's approbation has been sometimes awarded to productions apparently opposite in their style and aim. This is not to be explained by the variety of tastes in connoisseurs; for the claims in question are universally admitted, notwithstanding the influence of individual predilections. The admission supposes the existence of some less mutable criterion; and it is therefore important to inquire what are the grounds on which this approbation can be said to be consistent.

Considered generally, the Arts are often assumed to have a common character and end: but the vagueness of this principle offers no solution for the question proposed. The opposite process — the discrimination of the different means by which a common end is arrived at — will be found to lead to more definite and more useful results. In all the Fine Arts some external attraction,

* [Extracted from the Preface to a translation of Kugler's Handbook of the History of Painting, London, 1842.—Ed.]

some element of beauty, is the vehicle of mental pleasure or moral interest: but in considering the special form, or means, of any one of the Arts, as distinguished from the rest, the excellence of each is not found to be in proportion to the qualities which it is capable of expressing in common with its rivals, but to those qualities which are unattainable by them.

We thus comprehend why various schools have attained great celebrity in spite of certain defects. It is because their defects are generally such as other human attainments, other modes of expression, could easily supply: their excellencies, on the contrary, are their own, and are unapproachable except by means of the art in which they are displayed. Such excellencies constitute what may be called SPECIFIC STYLE.

Accordingly, it may always be concluded that pictures of acknowledged excellence, of whatever school, owe their reputation to the emphatic display of some qualities that are proper to the art. In histories of Painting these merits are often attempted to be conveyed in words, and the mode in which language endeavours to give an equivalent for the impressions produced by a picture is at once an illustration of the above principles. The description of the progress of time, of motion, the imagined interchange of speech, the comparison with things not present —all impossible in the silent, quiescent, and immutable Art—are resorted to without scruple in

describing pictures, yet the description does not therefore strike us as untrue. It will immediately be seen that the same liberty is allowable and necessary when representation enters into rivalry with description. The eye has its own poetry; and as the mute language of nature in its *simultaneous* effect (the indispensable condition of harmony) produces impressions which words restricted to mere *succession* can but imperfectly embody, so the finest qualities of the formative arts are those which language cannot adequately convey.* On the same grounds it must be apparent that a servile attention to the letter of description (as opposed to its translateable spirit), accuracy of historic details, exactness of costume, etc., are not essential in themselves, but are valuable only in proportion as they assist the demands of the art, or produce an effect on the imagination. This may sufficiently explain why an inattention to these points, on the part of great painters (and poets, as compared with mere historians), has interfered so little with their reputation. In this instance the powers of Painting are opposed to those of language generally; on the same principle, they would be distinguished in many respects from those of Poetry; in like manner, if we suppose a comparison with Sculpture, or any imitative art, the strength of Painting will

* See Lessing's "Laokoon." Compare Harris, "Three Treatises." London, 1744.

still consist in the distinctive attributes which are thus forced into notice. Of those attributes, some may be more prominent in one school, some in another; but they are all valued because they are characteristic—because the results are unattainable in the same perfection by any other means.

The principle here dwelt on with regard to Painting is equally applicable to all the Fine Arts: each art, as such, is raised by raising its characteristic qualities: each lays a stress on those means of expression in which its rivals are deficient, in order to compensate those in which its rivals surpass it. The principle extends even to the rivalry of the formative Arts generally with Nature. The absence of sound, and of progressive action, is supplied by a more significant, mute and momentary *appearance*. The arrangement which, apparently artless, fixes the attention on important points, the emphasis on essential as opposed to adventitious qualities, the power of selecting expressive forms, of arresting evanescent beauties, are all prerogatives by means of which a feeble imitation successfully contends even with its archetype. As this selection and adaptation are the qualities in which imitation, as opposed to nature, is strong, so the approach to literal rivalry is, as usual, in danger of betraying comparative weakness. Could the imitation of living objects, for example, in Painting or Sculpture, be carried to absolute deception as regards their mere surface, we should only be reminded that life and motion

were wanting. On the other hand, relative completeness, or that consistency of convention which suggests no want — the test of style — is attainable in the minute as well as in the large view of nature, and may be found in some of the Dutch as well as in the Italian masters. Even the elements of beauty, incompatible as they might seem to be with the subjects commonly treated by the former, are very apparent in their style of colouring and in other qualities.

The rivalry of the Arts with Nature thus suggests the definition of their *general style*. The rivalry of Art with Art points out the *specific style* of each mode of imitation. Both relate to the *means:* and the universal principle of beauty, which the former includes, undoubtedly places an elevated treatment of form, as well as of colour, among the higher attributes of Painting. The *end* of the Arts is commonly defined not only by their general nature, but by the consideration *to whom they are addressed.* The necessity of appealing, directly or indirectly, to human sympathies — the conclusion which the latter definition involves — tends to correct an exaggerated and exclusive attention to specific style, inasmuch as the end in question is more or less common to all the Fine Arts. The Genius of Painting might award the palm to Titian, but human beings would be more interested with the inventions of Raphael. The claims of the different schools are thus ultimately balanced by the

degrees in which they satisfy the mind; but as the enlightened observer is apt to form his conclusions by this latter standard alone, it has been the object of these remarks to invite his attention more especially to the excellence of the Art itself, on which the celebrity of every school more or less depends, and which, whatever be its themes, recommends itself by the evidence of mental labour, and in the end increases the sum of mental pleasure.

Next to the nature of the art itself, the influence of religion, of social and political relations, and of letters, the modifying circumstances of climate and of place, the character of a nation, a school, and an individual, and even the particular object of a particular painter, are to be taken into account, and open fresh sources of interest. With the cultivated observer, indeed, these associations are again in danger at first of superseding the consideration of the art as such; but by whatever means attention is invited, the judgment must be gradually exercised, and the eye unconsciously educated.

In avoiding too precise a definition of the end of Art, it may nevertheless be well to remember, that so great a difference in the highest moral interests as that which existed between the Pagan and Christian world, must of necessity involve important modifications, even in the physical elements of imitation. However imposing were the ideas of beauty and of power which the Pagan

arrived at, by looking around but not above him, by deriving his religion as well as his taste from the perfect attributes of life throughout nature, the Christian definition of the human being, at least, must be admitted to rest on more just and comprehensive relations. It is true the general character of the art itself is unchangeable, and that character was never more accurately defined than in the sculpture of the ancient Greeks; but new human feelings demanded corresponding means of expression, and it was chiefly reserved for Painting to embody them. That art, as treated by the great modern masters, had not, like Sculpture, a complete model in classic examples, and was thus essentially a modern creation. The qualities in which it is distinguished from the remaining specimens of classic Painting are, in fact, nearly identified with those which constitute its specific style. Hence, when carried to a perfection probably unknown to the ancients, and purified by a spiritual aim, the result sometimes became the worthy auxiliary of a religion that hallowed, but by no means interdicted, the admiration of nature.

The consideration of the influence of Religion on the Arts forces itself on the attention in investigating the progress of Painting, since so large a proportion of its creations was devoted to the service of the Church — in many instances, we fear we must add, the service of superstition. Yet the difference or abuse of creeds may be said in most

cases to affect works of art only in their extrinsic conditions; the great painters were so generally penetrated with the spirit of the faith they illustrated, that the most unworthy subjects were often the vehicles of feelings to which all classes of Christians are more or less alive. The implicit recognition of apocryphal authorities is, however, not to be dissembled. Indeed some acquaintance with the legends and superstitions of the middle ages is as necessary to the intelligence of the contemporary works of art, as the knowledge of the heathen mythology is to explain the subjects of Greek vases and marbles. Certain themes belong more especially to particular times and places: such are the incidents from the lives of the Saints *, the predilection for which varied with the devotional spirit of the age and the habits of different countries and districts, to say nothing of successive canonisations.† Even Scripture subjects had their epochs:

* For these, the compilation of the Bollandists might be considered more than sufficient; but for the wilder fables, from which the subjects of early works of art were often selected, the translations from Simeon Metaphrastes in Lippomano "De Vitis Sanctorum," the "Aurea Legenda" of Jacopo della Voragine, and the "Catalogus Sanctorum" of Peter de Natalibus, will be found the best guides.

† In altarpieces, it was common to represent Saints who lived in different ages, assembled round the enthroned Virgin and Child. This is not to be considered an anachronism, since it rather represented a heavenly than an earthly assembly. Many pictures of the kind in churches were the property or gift of private individuals, and in this case the selection of the Saints rested with the original proprietor.

at first the dread of idolatry had the effect of introducing and consecrating a system of merely typical representation, and hence the characters and events of the Old Testament were long preferred to those of the New. The cycle from the latter, though augmented, like the Bible series generally, from apocryphal sources, was from first to last comparatively restricted, many subjects remaining untouched even in the best ages of Art. This is again to be explained by remembering, that while the scenes and personages of the Old Testament were understood to be figurative, those of the New were regarded as objects of direct edification, or even of homage, and hence were selected with caution.* In general, the incidents that exemplified the leading dogmas of faith were chosen in preference to others, and thus the Arts became the index of the tenets that were prominent at different periods.

The selection, or at least the treatment, of subjects from the Gospels, may have been regulated in some instances also by their assumed correspondence with certain prophecies; indeed, the circumstances alluded to in the predictions of the Old Testament are not unfrequently blended in pictures with the facts of the New. The subjects called the Deposition from the Cross, and the Pietà

* "Picturæ ecclesiarum sunt quasi libri laycorum," is the observation of a writer of the twelfth century. — *Comestor: Historia Scholastica.* (Hist. Evang. c. 5.)

(the dead Christ mourned by the Marys and Disciples, or by the Madonna alone), may be thus explained.* Hence, too, the never-failing accompaniments of the Nativity †; hence the "Wise Men" are represented as kings ‡, and the Flight into Egypt is attended with the destruction of the idols.§ Subjects of this class were sometimes combined in regular cycles, which, in the form they assumed after the revival of Art, probably had their origin in the selection of meditations for the Rosary (instituted in the thirteenth century): among these were the "Joys" ‖ and "Sorrows" ¶ of the Virgin, and the principal events of the Passion.** Other

* Zechariah, xii. 10.

† Isaiah, i. 3.

‡ Psalm lxxii. 10, 11. Certain accessories in pictures of this subject are derived from Isaiah, lx. 6.

§ Isaiah, xix. 1. (See Comestor, Hist. Evang., c. 10.) The incident may have been directly borrowed from an apocryphal source, the "Evangelium Infantiæ." Circumstances adopted from similar authorities were sometimes interwoven with the subjects of the New Testament.

‖ 1. The Annunciation. 2. The Visitation. 3. The Nativity. 4. The Adoration of the Kings. 5. The Presentation in the Temple. 6. Christ found by his Mother in the Temple. 7. The Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin.

¶ 1. The Prophecy of Simeon. (Luke, ii. 35.) 2. The Flight into Egypt. 3. Christ, while disputing with the Doctors in the Temple, missed by his Mother. 4. Christ betrayed. 5. The Crucifixion (the Virgin and St. John only present). 6. The Deposition from the Cross. 7. The Ascension (the Virgin left on earth).

** The "Seven Hours of the Passion" were:—1. The Last Supper. 2. The Agony in the Garden. 3. Christ before

themes common at the same time had their appropriate application; the history of St. John the Baptist was the constant subject in Baptisteries; the chapels especially dedicated to the Virgin were adorned with scenes from her life*; the hosts of of heaven, "Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers," † were sometimes introduced in

Caiaphas. 4. Christ before Herod. 5. Christ crowned with Thorns. 6. Pilate washing his Hands. 7. The Crucifixion (the centurion and others present). The more complete series contained in addition to these and other subjects:—The Flagellation. The Ecce Homo. The Procession to Calvary, or Christ bearing his Cross. The Entombment. The Descent to the Limbus. The Resurrection. The Life of Christ contained, in addition to many of the above, the Baptism and Transfiguration. The Life of the Virgin, though interwoven with that of Christ, formed, for the most part, a distinct series. The subjects of all these cycles varied in number, perhaps accordingly as they were separately or collectedly adapted to the divisions of the Rosary and Corona. The "Speculum Salvationis" (Augsburg edition) assigns seven to each of the first three series, in the above order. The more ordinary division was five for each.

* See the "Evangelium de Nativitate Mariæ" and the "Protevangelium Jacobi." The subjects from the history of Joachim and Anna, the parents of the Virgin (painted by Taddeo Gaddi, Domenico Ghirlandajo, Gaudenzio Ferrari, and others), are chiefly in the latter.

† The orders of angels, as represented by the Italian painters, appear to have been derived from a treatise "De Hierarchiâ cœlesti" (c. 7–11.), which bears the name of Dionysius Areopagita, and may be traced to Jewish sources. St. Thomas Aquinas (after Dionysius) gives the nine orders of angels as follows: "Seraphim, Cherubim, Throni, Dominationes, Virtutes, Potestates, Principatus, Archangeli, Angeli." Vasari ventured to cover a ceiling in Florence with "Illustrations" of

cupolas; but the more customary subjects were the Ascension of Christ and the Assumption of the Virgin.* The subjects of the Old Testament were universally considered as types: their assumed ulterior meaning is frequently explained in glosses of MS. Bibles, and in the "Compendiums of Theology" which were in the hands of all ecclesiastics. These commentaries contained much that may be traced to the early Fathers; but during and after the revival of Art they were more immediately derived from the scholastic theologians †, whose

a still profounder lore—the Cabala. See his "Ragionamenti" (Gior. 1.). Compare Brucker, Hist. Philosophiæ.

* This last subject frequently adorned the high altar. The subject of the Death of the Virgin, which occurs in MSS. of the middle ages, as well as in pictures of later date, was gradually superseded by it. For the legend, see the "Flos Sanctorum" (Aug. 25.) and the "Aurea Legenda:" both give the early authorities.

† The most renowned of these doctors were of the Dominican order (de' Predicatori); the same fraternity afterwards boasted some distinguished painters (Angelico da Fiesole, Fra Bartolommeo, etc.), and on many accounts may be considered the chief medium of communication between the Church and its handmaid, Art. Among the earlier commentaries on Scripture evidently consulted by the painters, was the Historia Scholastica of Comestor, already referred to.

For information respecting the legends and attributes of the saints, the English reader may consult the first volume of Lord Lindsay's "Sketches of the History of Christian Art," London, 1847. A complete account of these legends, and which will probably exhaust the subject, is about to appear from the pen of Mrs. Jameson. Among French works, the "Essai sur les Légendes Pieuses du Moyen Age," by Alfred Maury, Paris, 1843,

writings appear to have had considerable influence on the sacred Painting of Italy and Europe.

Didron's "Iconographie Chrétienne," Paris, 1843, and the "Manuel d'Iconographie Chrétienne," by the same author and Durand, Paris, 1845 (the latter work relating to the Greek Church), will be found useful. There is also a modern French translation of the Golden Legend. Various German writers have of late years contributed to facilitate the study of medieval works of art. Among their labours may be mentioned the "Ikonographie der Heiligen" (Radowitz), Berlin, 1834; "Christliche Kunstsymbolik und Ikonographie," Frankfurt a. M., 1834; "Die bildlichen Darstellungen im Sanctuarium der Christlichen Kirchen," by Dr. J. G. Müller, Trier, 1835; "Die Attribute der Heiligen," Hanover, 1843; and "Die Heiligenbilder," by Dr. Heinrich Alt, Berlin, 1843. Other German works of the kind are in the course of publication.

No. III.

ON THE ORIGIN OF THE MODERN GERMAN SCHOOL OF FRESCO PAINTING.*

THE present German School of Fresco Painters has been formed within the last twenty-five years. Its first essays were in a great measure the result of a general spirit of imitation which willingly adopted all that was associated with the habits of the later middle ages. It is here proposed to review the origin and progress of this spirit in the present century. The historians of modern German art have indeed traced its rise to earlier influences, but all agree that the circumstances about to be noticed, greatly promoted the introduction of a reformed taste in Painting.

The efforts to create a new style of art, in Germany, in the beginning of the present century, were intimately connected with the struggle for political independence. The cathedrals and churches on the Rhine had been more or less desecrated and plundered, and the pictures by the early German masters dispersed and sold. The gradual recovery of these ended in the formation of collections of such works; this led to a higher appreciation of their merits, indulgently seen as they were by patriots anxious to restore and maintain all that

* [Extracted from a paper in the Appendix to the Report of the Select Committee on Fine Arts. 1841. — ED.]

especially characterised the German nation. By men thus inspired, the religion and even the superstitions of their forefathers were regarded with respect and interest. German artists and writers again, who visited Italy, dwelt on the relation that had subsisted between Germany and Italy before and since the revival of letters, not only in politics but in the Arts. The Tower at Pisa, the church of St. Francis at Assisi, and other buildings, had been erected by Germans; and it was remembered with pride, that the new life of Italy had been kindled chiefly by the genius of the northern nations. The spirit of the middle ages was thus in a manner revived, and the Germans looked with complacency on that period when the Teutonic nations, unassisted (as they assume) by classic examples, produced a characteristic style of architecture and developed their native feeling in the arts of design and in poetry. In those ages, Architecture, the most necessary of the Arts, and therefore the first in date, had time to develop itself fully, especially in the north; but before Painting could unfold itself in an equal degree, the thirst for the revival of classic learning, and the imitation of classic models, prevented the free formation of a Christian and national style. The early specimens of art which were most free from this classic influence were thus regarded with higher veneration, and the Germans of the 19th century boldly proposed to throw aside all classic prejudices, however imposing, and follow up the

imperfect beginnings of the later middle ages in a kindred spirit. This general aim connected the first efforts of Italian art still more with those of their transalpine admirers; and the German painters who visited Italy recognised the feeling that inspired them in all works which were supposed to be independent of a classic influence.*

The degrees in which this spirit has prevailed have necessarily varied. With many, the imitation of the earlier masters soon gave place to a juster estimate of the general character of the art. The antique has even, to a certain extent, reassumed its empire; but, on the other hand, some of the best German artists have unflinchingly maintained the general principles above described, even to the present day; indeed not a few had at first returned to the old faith, and had imbibed with it a still deeper attachment to the works of the early painters.

It is necessary to bear these facts in mind, in order to understand the particular aim which many (perhaps the best) of the German artists have in view. The veneration for the general spirit which prevailed at the revival of art was accompanied by an imitation of the characteristics and even the technical methods of the older painters; the habits and the productions of medieval Italy were, as we have seen, easily associated with German feelings,

* See, as a specimen of many treatises of the kind, Ansichten über die bildenden Künste, &c., von einem deutschen Künstler in Rom. Heidelberg u. Speier, 1820, p. 65.

and to this general imitation the adoption of fresco painting is partly to be attributed, though it is doubted whether that art was ever practised at an early period, beyond the Alps. Fresco painting was, in short, only one of many circumstances which had acquired interest and importance in the eyes of German painters from the above causes. The predilection for the free examples of Christian art did not exclude the study of better specimens created in the same spirit, but the indications of a classic influence were sufficient to condemn the finest works, and hence the later productions of Raphael were not considered fit models for study.

Let us now consider how far we, as Englishmen, can share these feelings and aims. If the national ardour of the Germans is to be our example, we should dwell on the fact that the Arts in England under Henry the Third, in the 13th century, were as much advanced as in Italy itself; that our Architecture was even more characteristic and freer from classic influence; that Sculpture, to judge from Wells Cathedral, bade fair to rival the contemporary efforts in Tuscany, and that our Painting of the same period might fairly compete with that of Siena and Florence. Specimens of early English painting were lately to be seen,—some relics still exist on the walls of the edifices at Westminster. The proposed embellishment of the new Houses of Parliament might be the

more interesting, since, after a lapse of six centuries, it would renew the same style of decoration (though with far superior knowledge) on the same spot. The painters employed in the time of Henry the Third were English: their names are preserved.*

Thus, in doing justice to the patriotism of the Germans, the first conviction that would press upon us would be, that our own country and our own English feelings are sufficient to produce and foster a characteristic style of art; that although we might share much of the spirit of the Germanic nations, this spirit would be modified by our peculiar habits; above all, we should entirely agree with the Germans in concluding that we are as little in want of foreign artists to represent our history and express our feelings, as of foreign soldiers to defend our liberties. Even the question of ability (although that ability is not to be doubted for a moment) is unimportant; for, to trust to our own resources should be, under any circumstances, the only course. Ability, if wanting, would of necessity follow. In the Arts, as in arms, discipline, practice, and opportunity, are necessary to the acquisition of skill and confidence: in both want of experience may occasion failure at first: but

* See Smith, "Antiquities of Westminster," London, 1837, p. 271. He remarks: "of the *seventy-six* painters who were employed in St. Stephen's chapel, it is worthy of observation that the whole were natives of this country, with the exception perhaps of *two*."

nothing could lead to failure more effectually than the absence of sympathy and moral support on the part of the country. It is sometimes mortifying to find that foreigners are more just to English artists than the English themselves are. Many of our artists who have settled or occasionally painted in Italy, Germany, Russia, and even in France, have been highly esteemed and employed.

If, however, we are to look to the Germans, the first quality which invites our imitation is their patriotism. It may or may not follow that the mode of encouraging native art which is now attracting attention at Munich is fit to be adopted here. We have seen that a considerable degree of imitation of early precedents is mixed up with the German efforts: this of itself is hardly to be defended; but the imitation of that imitation, without sharing its inspiring feeling, would be utterly useless, as well as humiliating. The question of fresco painting is, in like manner, to be considered on its own merits, without reference to what the Germans have done, except as an experiment with regard to climate. The fresco painters of Munich generally work on the walls from May to September only: the greater part of the year is thus devoted to the preparation of the cartoons. Five months in the year would probably be the longest period in which it would be possible to paint in fresco in London.

Fresco painting, as a durable and immoveable decoration, can only be fitly applied to buildings of

a permanent character. Not only capricious alterations, but even repairs, cannot be attempted without destroying the paintings. There can be no doubt that the general introduction of such decorations would lead to a more solid style of architecture; at the same time the impossibility of change would be considered by many as an objection. This objection would not, however, apply to public buildings. On the whole, the smoke of London might be found less prejudicial than that of the candles in Italian churches. The Last Judgment of Michael Angelo could hardly have suffered more in three centuries from coal fires than from the church ceremonies, which have hastened its ruin. The superior brilliancy (as regards this quality alone) of frescoes which adorn the galleries of private houses, where they have not been exposed to such injurious influences, is very remarkable; as, for example, in the Farnese ceiling. The occasional unsound state of some walls, even in buildings of the most solid construction in Rome, is to be attributed to slight but frequent shocks of earthquake. A ceiling painted by one of the scholars of the Carracci in the Costaguti Palace in Rome fell from this cause. Such disadvantages might fairly be set against any that are to be apprehended in London. With regard to the modes of cleaning fresco, the description of the method adopted by Carlo Maratti in cleaning Raphael's frescoes when blackened with smoke happens to be

preserved: but, no doubt, modern chemistry could suggest the best possible means.

The general qualities in art which fresco demands, as well as those which are less compatible with it, have been elsewhere considered. It has been often assumed that it is fittest for public and extensive works. Public works, whether connected with religion or patriotism, are the most calculated to advance the character of the art, for as they are addressed to the mass of mankind, or at least to the mass of a nation, they must be dignified. Existing works of the kind may be more or less interesting, but there are scarcely any that are trivial. This moral dignity is soon associated in the mind of the artist with a corresponding grandeur of appearance, and his attention is thus involuntarily directed to the higher principles of his art.

The painters employed on an extensive series of frescoes would have to devote a considerable portion of their lives to the object. In such an undertaking, they ought not to encounter any impatience or want of confidence on the part of their employers: the trial should be a fair one. It would hardly be possible for the artists to paint any oil pictures while so occupied; their designs and cartoons would, at least for some time, require all their attention. After a few years, when assistants would be formed, more leisure might be gained; and it was under these circumstances that Raphael painted in oil when employed by Julius the Second

in Rome. But for the first three years after he began the frescoes in the Vatican, he confined himself entirely to those labours; and Michael Angelo, as is well known, completed the ceiling of the Cappella Sistina without assistance.

The more general practice was, however, to employ scholars; and this is one of the serious considerations connected with the present question. Owing to the self-educating system of painters in this country, the younger artists are more independent than they are elsewhere, and they might have some reluctance to co-operate in works in which their best efforts would only contribute to the fame of the professor under whom they might be employed. In Italy, and in recent times in Germany, this subordination was not felt to be irksome, and the best scholars were soon entrusted with independent commissions. It is to be hoped that artists thus created in England would be commissioned to decorate private houses; the result, at all events, would be that the school would gain in design, and probably without any sacrifice of the more refined technical processes in colouring, in which the English painters now excel their Continental rivals. Some Italian painters, for example, Andrea del Sarto, the Carracci and their scholars, were equally skilful in oil and in fresco.

No. IV.

THE STATE AND PROSPECTS OF THE ENGLISH SCHOOL,

CONSIDERED WITH REFERENCE TO THE PROMOTION OF ART IN CONNECTION WITH THE REBUILDING OF THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.*

In the Report of the Committee on the Fine Arts, appointed by the House of Commons in 1841, it was observed, that "the chief object aimed at by the appointment of the Committee," was "the encouragement of the Fine Arts of this country," and that, by means of the decoration of the Houses of Parliament, "encouragement beyond the means of private patronage, would be afforded, not only to the higher walks, but to all branches of art."

It is here proposed to consider this question with reference to the state and prospects of the English school of painting. And first it is to be observed that, although "all branches of art" may be entitled to the consideration of the Commission, historical painting is not only generally fittest for decoration on a large scale, but is precisely the class of painting which, more than any other, requires "encouragement beyond the means of private patronage." The want of such encouragement has long been regretted, not by professors

* [Printed in the Appendix to the First Report of the Commissioners on the Fine Arts. 1842. — Ed.]

only, but by all who have turned their attention to the state of painting in England.

The desire thus manifested would not be entitled to attention if it could be traced to a passing influence, or to a disposition to imitate what had been achieved in other countries, since this could only lead to the adoption of superficial qualities, betraying, sooner or later, the absence of a vital impulse. Such attempts would be the more likely to be ineffectual, if a different style, however humble, really corresponding with the national taste, were at the same time cultivated with marked success. The history of art is not wanting in examples of schools and of periods, with regard to which it might be a question whether a sudden demand for historical painting would have been a boon to the artists or to the lovers of art. The Dutch school of the seventeenth century might be adduced as a case in point.

But even where the direction of national taste is favourable to the cultivation of historical painting, the peculiar difficulties of that branch of art must sometimes place it in unfavourable contrast with inferior departments more commonly practised, and in which a relative perfection is more commonly attained. The disadvantages resulting from this contrast are peculiar to modern times: at the revival of art, and during its progress to excellence, the efforts in the higher style were not in danger of being undervalued, or stimulated to injudicious rivalry, by such a comparison. No school ex-

clusively devoted to indiscriminate imitation then existed. The present influence of such schools and examples may partly account for and excuse the occasional fastidiousness of modern amateurs with regard to efforts in historical painting, and may render a consistency of style more difficult for the historical artist.

These admissions respecting the present difficulties of the highest style of art, cannot however render it necessary to vindicate its intrinsic claims; the sole question for consideration now is, whether in this country, and at this time, there exist grounds for hoping that historical painting could be cultivated with success, and whether it would awaken a more general interest if it were duly encouraged by the state.

That the actual estimation of this department of art really indicates the tendency of taste in our own nation, is proved by the repeated exertions of individuals in proposing plans for the promotion of the style in question; by the generous encouragement occasionally extended to its votaries by others; but above all by the efforts of the artists themselves. For it must always be borne in mind that the aims of the artists are not to be considered as accidental predilections apart from the public feeling, but as representing a portion of that feeling. However variously modified by other influences, the formative arts must always express the manners, the taste, and, in some measure,

even the intellectual habits of the nation in which they are cultivated.

But to whatever extent the mind or manners of a nation may be communicable to its productions in art, the result is to be looked for rather in general tendencies than in degrees of technical excellence. Again, not all such tendencies can be strictly regarded as belonging to national taste. Thus, they cannot be so evident in religious subjects, in which a common education, and long consecrated themes, have tended to elevate to nearly the same standard the taste of the civilised world; nor are they so distinctly manifested even in some subjects of local interest, such as the acts of illustrious individuals, and the commemoration of national events; themes which patriotism has everywhere supplied, and which presuppose a uniformly ennobling influence. The proper and peculiar tendency, the physiognomy, so to speak, of national taste, is to be detected in more spontaneous aims; in the direction which the arts have taken, when they have been the free exponents of the intellectual and moral habits of society.

If, then, it were proposed to compare the English school of painting (as regards its general tendency) with the schools of other countries, it would be just to consider the direction of taste in the latter when art has *not* been employed in the service of religion and patriotism, for it is, in a great measure,

under such circumstances that painting has been cultivated in England. If (confining our attention to the comparison suggested) we turn our attention to the history of art in Spain, we find that during the most flourishing period of that school there was a constant demand for altar-pieces. But when not employed on these, and when free to exercise their own taste, or to consult that of the public at large, the artists rarely selected subjects which can be said to be addressed to cultivated spectators. It has been remarked that neither Roelas, Castillo, or Murillo (and the same might be affirmed of other Spanish masters) ever painted a merely historic or mythologic subject.*

It is repeated, the free efforts of the English artists are to be regarded as an evidence of the tendency of taste in a considerable portion of the public; but it remains to observe that both the efforts and the taste may be almost irrespective of the common relation between demand and supply, since the due encouragement of the higher branches of art may be "beyond the means of private patronage." This apparent contradiction of a desire for a particular class of art existing independently, in a great degree, of its usual consequences — the

* Cean Bermudez, sobre el Estilo y Gusto en la Pintura de la Escuela Sevillana, Cadiz, 1806, p. 125.

actual employment of those who, with due encouragement, might respond to it,—is explained by the fact that the decoration of public buildings, with a view to moral or religious purposes, has always been necessary for the complete establishment of a school of historical painting. The history of art shows that whatever may be the extent of general education, the service of religion or the protection of the state is indispensable, for the full practical development of the highest style of painting. Thus formed and thus exercised, historic Art lives and is progressive; but with the aid, however liberal, of private patronage alone, either its aim becomes lowered, or its worthier efforts are not sufficiently numerous to re-act on the general taste.

To many it may appear unnecessary to assert the capacity of the English painters or of the English public for the cultivation or appreciation of what is called elevated Art. But it must be remembered that while the great stimulus and support of public employment is wanting, the exertions of the artists are gradually compelled into other directions; and some observers, looking at this result alone, may draw erroneous inferences from it, — may sometimes hastily conclude that pictures of familiar subjects, which have been of late years predominant and deservedly attractive, represent the universal and unalterable taste of the nation.

Such observers might at the same time remark that the productions in question oftener approach the dignity of history than the vulgarity of the lowest order of subjects, and either by the choice of incidents, or by their treatment, still attest the character of the national taste. Indeed the evidence of an intellectual aim in familiar subjects, may be considered as a sufficient proof that the artists of England want only the opportunities which those of other nations have enjoyed, in order to distinguish themselves in the worthiest undertakings. But to place this question in its proper light, it will be necessary to take into consideration the peculiar circumstances under which the English school has been formed.

The great impediments to the cultivation of the higher branches of Art have been already adverted to. With few exceptions, painting in England has not been admitted into churches, (a subject which it is not intended here to discuss,) nor has it been employed to any extent in the embellishment of public buildings. Other difficulties have existed, owing to accidental circumstances.

The perfection which the great Italian masters arrived at, was the result, it is true, of slow experience, but happily for them the more ornamental and fascinating qualities of the art were attained last. With the English school it was the reverse. Its rise in the last century was remarkable for sudden

excellence in colouring and chiaroscuro, an excellence so great, as to eclipse contemporary efforts in a severer style, while it gave a bias to the school. The peculiar union of what are called the ornamental parts of the art, with those essential to history, which has prevailed in England, not unattended with some sacrifice of more solid qualities, has been generally attributed to this influence.

This mixed character became more decided in consequence of the circumstances under which the school was developed; namely, the subsequent introduction and prevalence of a style suited to small dimensions. Most of the distinguished English artists in the time of Reynolds painted the size of life. The experiment, as regards private patronage, seems to have been then fairly made, and the gradual change to reduced dimensions was the consequence of the insufficient demand for large works, arising from the limited size of English dwelling-houses.

Hence the execution of small historical pictures; a practice recommended by the occasional example of the best masters of every school. But where the subject is dignified, smallness of dimensions cannot consistently be accompanied by smallness of treatment. Minute imitation is not found in Correggio's Gethsemane, nor in Raphael's Vision of Ezekiel, diminutive as they are. The breadth of manner which is indispensable in such elevated themes is

not, however, essential in familiar subjects; and hence, when specimens of both styles, similar in size, but widely different in their technical conditions, are placed together, the impression produced by so marked a contrast is unsatisfactory, without reference to the difference of subject.

Thus, partly through the influence of the "ornamental" character of the school, and partly to prevent this abrupt contrast of treatment in pictures which are to hang together in galleries, (for under such circumstances, the more abstract style appears to disadvantage,) the kind of historic art chiefly followed, is that which admits picturesque materials, thus combining the attractions of familiar subjects with the dignity of the historic style. Under such influences has been formed an interesting portion of the more modern English school, distinguished, on the one hand from the Dutch, and on the other, from the small works of the Italian masters, embracing a great variety of subjects, sometimes scarcely removed from the familiar, sometimes approaching the grandest aim.

The circumstances that have led to the general adoption of a small size are thus, it appears, accidental, and the actual practice of our painters cannot be adduced as a proof of their original choice of such conditions. The frequent efforts on their part, amid various difficulties, to recommend larger dimensions, afford sufficient evidence of the

real inclination of the artists. These efforts have not been confined to the ardour of youthful inexperience; many of our best artists have returned to, or persevered in, such undertakings to the last; with some, the ambition to encounter the difficulties of this style was first kindled, even at an advanced period of their career. In the last century all the principal English artists, notwithstanding Hogarth's success in small pictures, were in the habit, as already observed, of painting the size of life—Reynolds (considered as an historical painter), West, Barry, Fuseli, Copley, Northcote, Opie, and others.

It cannot therefore be admitted that the artists of England are by their own choice confined to small dimensions; but the questions now are—

Whether it is possible to afford more favourable opportunities than those which have hitherto existed for the adequate display of historic Art?

Whether such opportunities will be sufficiently numerous? for if not, the school, after attaining the excellence which honourable employment will assuredly call forth, may again languish; and lastly,

Whether such encouragement will be in danger of diverting the taste and practice of some artists from that domestic art which is now so successfully cultivated?

The first of these questions, while it is immediately connected with the special object of the Commission, involves the consideration of the

abstract relation of dimensions to styles of Art. This subject has been often discussed on grounds independent of technical requisites; and as very different opinions have been the result, it may here be allowable, without undervaluing the conclusions derived from other considerations, to refer to the mere physical or external conditions which must necessarily affect the question.

In comparing the treatment of cabinet pictures with that of works of the largest size—for example, where the figures are colossal—it may be observed that the small picture, besides being executed with delicacy, generally exhibits a certain fulness of detail, while the large work is not only less elaborate, but is composed of fewer parts. Even assuming the same subject, and one requiring a variety of minute accessories, to be represented on a colossal and on a small scale, it may be safely affirmed that the degree of detail which would be admissible in the small picture would be objectionable in the larger. In a grander and more ideal subject, where such detail would be inadmissible under any circumstances, the comparison could be less fairly made, but a similar influence would be more or less apparent. Thus, assuming other conditions to be common, the greater space never allows the introduction of *more* detail than the smaller, but generally, if not always, requires *less*.

Without at present entering into the examination of this question, as connected with the laws of

vision, it may be remarked that, although the indistinctness arising from distance may be counteracted by increased dimensions, and by appropriate style and treatment, it must still tend to exclude certain refinements of imitation which are appreciable in pictures requiring to be seen near, — refinements capable of conferring an interest on details that may be unimportant in themselves. The inference is applicable to the question proposed. The familiar subject, as fullest of accidental circumstance, must be best displayed in dimensions fitted for near inspection, and, in an advanced state of Art (as regards technical excellence), must be a consequence of the habitual adoption of such dimensions. On the other hand, the larger the figures in a picture, the greater the distance at which the work must be seen; and as the absence of minute particulars is felt to be the attribute of distance without reference to the size of objects, so the accessories in the larger work of art require to be few and important. Thus, again, increased dimensions, by involving the suppression of detail, suggest subjects of corresponding dignity.

Such appears to be the relation of dimensions to style and subject, considered with reference to technical results: as regards the question of taste, it may be observed that the involuntary conclusions derived from the influence of association agree with the practice of Art. The analogy between grandeur and the absence of detail, and

between minute circumstance and familiar incidents, is sufficiently apparent. With these analogies, the impressions produced by magnitude and its attributes, and by the opposite qualities, respectively correspond.

The general relation thus defined has often been reversed in works of Art, but not with equally good results, for it may be remarked that large works, when elaborate in detail, and full of accidental circumstance, have the unpleasing effect of magnified cabinet pictures; on the other hand, diminutive historical works, when treated with that breadth which belongs to the grandest style, must give the impression of large works diminished. The last-mentioned inconsistency can hardly be objected to: grandeur of conception and treatment must unquestionably be acceptable in any form; but nevertheless the abstract breadth of imitation which is indispensable in elevated subjects is, under the circumstances supposed, a kind of contradiction, inasmuch as the vague generalisation of a distant or ideal effect is submitted to close inspection, and can only be so viewed. The small pictures by Raphael and Correggio, before referred to, are of this description; but the instances of such subjects being treated on so minute a scale are not frequent.

The extreme conclusions which might be deduced from the above conditions are strictly conformable to the authority of the grandest examples of art. When the representation is dilated to its full mea-

sure, details of costume, illusion, and even the more delicate varieties of colour, are no longer fitted for the dimensions. But in proportion as the subordinate excellencies of imitation are excluded by the nature of the existing conditions, the display of the nobler qualities, still attainable, becomes more necessary. As the resources of art become circumscribed, the artist's aim becomes elevated. In the highest style of painting, as in sculpture, the representation of inanimate substances ceases to be satisfactory when they no longer directly assist impressions of beauty or grandeur: and the styles of art in which the living form can be least dispensed with, are precisely those which, by the abstract character of their imitation, render it least objectionable.

The foregoing considerations may warrant the conclusion that the grandest style of art is best displayed in large dimensions. It will also follow that the treatment of subjects fitted for such dimensions, must tend to ennoble the style and taste of the artist.

Works of such magnitude cannot be often in demand for ordinary dwelling-houses; hence, while pictures are excluded from churches, the places in which it is possible and desirable to employ the higher branches of art will be the national and municipal public buildings; all localities, in a word, where painting can be displayed to the public in its highest and most didactic form.

But—to proceed to the second question proposed—will such opportunities and means of encouragement be sufficiently numerous and enduring? The answer can be best anticipated by the exertions of the artists; it may be reasonably expected that the employment of native talent in a great national building will serve as an example throughout the country, and that the style of Art which will be thus recommended and promoted, may be even adopted in fit situations for the decoration of the mansions and villas of affluent individuals.

In answer to the third question, namely, whether the encouragement of historical painting may tend to alter the direction of the taste and practice of those artists pursuing a hitherto more thriving and popular branch of Art? it may be allowable to observe that even such a danger would be no just argument against the employment of deserving candidates for fame in another department. But the long-neglected interests of the historical painters can, it is believed, be promoted without interfering in any degree with the prosperity of the class in question. That school is already formed*; and the cause to which it chiefly

[* The result has been precisely what was foreseen by Mr. Eastlake. Of the principal members of the school "already formed" scarcely any have come forward. We do not find amongst the competitors the names of Landseer, Turner, Leslie, Mulready, &c., but the call for the production of works in that higher branch, not hitherto patronised, has produced

owed its rise, — the possibility of its productions being placed in apartments of ordinary dimensions, — must ensure its duration; added to which, the societies for the encouragement of Art by subscription and lottery, have generally in view the acquisition and distribution of comparatively small pictures. The object now is to find opportunities as fit (they cannot possibly be as numerous) for the development and display of historical painting on a large scale. Whatever may be the influence of the proposed encouragement on the rising generation of artists, it is at all events desirable that inclination should be free; that the inheritors of that enthusiasm which prompted the best English artists of the last century to offer to decorate St. Paul's Cathedral and other buildings at their own expense, may no longer ask in vain even for space.

The general tendency of the national talent has been hitherto considered in a great measure apart from the question of the actual qualification of the artists. It may be sufficient, in reference to this part of the subject, to acknowledge that the difficulties of the style of Art which is now proposed, may be peculiarly great in England, owing to the habits and circumstances before adverted to; and that no common energy will be necessary to surmount such difficulties. But while the artists are

several artists of great promise, before almost unknown to the public. — Ed.]

expected to show themselves worthy of entering on that career which is now opening to them, it is but just to remind the enlightened judges of Art who refer to the great works of other countries, that those works were the result of repeated essays, and that considerable time was necessary for the formation of the taste and practice of those who produced them. In justice to the artists, the trial should be as fairly made in England.

On ordinary occasions the imitative arts may be considered as adventitious embellishments, but in proposing to adorn an important national edifice, where it is essential that a characteristic unity of design should be maintained throughout, painting should appear as the auxiliary of architecture. It was thus that it was employed in the best ages of Greece and Italy, and it was thus that its highest development was ensured. In the present instance the chief decorations in painting will be required to be on an extensive scale. The difficulty of keeping large masses of canvass well stretched during all changes of weather, has been considered an objection to the employment of that material under such circumstances. The evil here alluded to may be seen in its worst form, in the ceiling of the Chapel at Whitehall, owing to the surface of the paintings being highly varnished. The fittest kinds of painting, for the decoration of architecture, are those which can be applied, when required, to every surface, curved as well as plane, and for such

general decoration, fresco — recommended as it is by the example of the great masters — appears to be better adapted than any other method.,

Its difficulties are not to be dissembled; they are, however, not the difficulties of the mere method, but arise from the necessity of an especial attention to those qualities which rank highest in Art; qualities which, when not absolutely indispensable, are too often neglected. Defects in composition, form, action, expression, and the treatment of drapery may be redeemed in an oil-painting by various merits; not so in a fresco. A style of Art thus circumscribed cannot, therefore, be recommended for exclusive adoption; but if studied together with oil-painting, its influence can hardly fail to be beneficial. The great Italian masters, as is well known, practised both methods; hence their employment, frequent as it was, in fresco, led to no imperfection, but, on the contrary, may be considered to have been mainly conducive to the vigorous character of Italian design.

The immediate and necessary connexion of this mode of painting with the highest aims of Art fits it to embody those inventions which belong essentially to the domain of thought. As a mode of decoration for public buildings it has peculiar recommendations: no style of painting is more clear, distinct, and effective at a distance. This is partly to be referred to the thorough execution, founded

on the intelligence of form, which it requires, and to the brilliancy of the material employed for the lights. But there are other causes of this distinctness of effect more directly connected with general design. With dimensions and distance, and a treatment that depends rather on power of light than on intensity or quantity of shade for its effect, a style arises which developes the elements of composition in some measure distinct from chiaroscuro. The influence of these conditions is apparent in the best Italian frescoes, which, at the same time that they exhibit the happiest adaptation of perspective and foreshortening, and often the most skilful management of gradations of light, are remarkable for impressive clearness of arrangement.

This style of composition is still more apparent in the celebrated cartoons of Raphael, in which it is carried to the most emphatic simplicity, still combining the picturesque principle of depth, as opposed to the flatness of basso-rilievo. These works were evidently treated with reference to the material in which they were to be ultimately executed, namely, tapestry; in that material, as wrought in Raphael's time, powerful effects of light and shade were unattainable,—a defect attempted to be remedied by heightening the relief of some of the objects with gold. The figures are, however, colossal in size, as the works were to be seen at a considerable distance, and the great artist attained distinctness by means of composition almost alone. The principal figures

are rendered important chiefly by the place they occupy, and the story is comprehended at the first glance; thus a skilful arrangement supplies the absence of those modes of relief which might be resorted to in oil-painting; indeed the effect of light and shade, making every allowance for the injuries of time, is far weaker than that attainable in fresco.*

But assuming this general style of composition to be applicable to fresco, it cannot be objected that, owing to its peculiar fitness in the case referred to, it would in any degree disqualify the artist for the practice of composition in oil-painting; for the cartoons of Raphael have always been considered to be among the most perfect examples of arrangement and of masterly clearness in telling a story, without any reference to the particular conditions which may have influenced the painter.

In like manner as regards colouring, the practice of fresco has never been found to have any unfavourable influence on that of oil-painting, but rather the reverse. Without referring to particular works as instances of the perfection in both methods, which the Italian masters of different schools—Francia and Raphael, Andrea del Sarto and Guido, Guercino and Pordenone† attained, it

* [This subject is again referred to in another paper (No. VIII.), but as the observations are varied, both passages are retained. — Ed.]

† For a description of Pordenone's principal fresco, the cupola

may be sufficient to mention the example of Correggio, — in the opinion of Reynolds * the most consummate of painters as regards colour and execution. This great artist painted more in fresco than in oil, looking to the quantity of surface covered. In his case it is evident that even the comparative absence of depth and mass of shade in fresco had no unfavourable influence on his practice as an oil-painter; while the clearness of his colouring in his oil-paintings may not unreasonably be attributed in some degree to his experience in the other method.† And here it may be allowable to express the opinion, that the great skill of the English artists in water colours might be the means of introducing new technical merits, and a new perfection in the practice of colouring in fresco, which might again directly benefit the school of oil-painters.

of S. Rocco at Venice, see Boschini, La Carta del Navegar Pittoresco, Ven. 1660, pp. 90–94.

* Notes on Du Fresnoy, Note LV.

† The works of Correggio in fresco are here referred to merely to show that the practice of that method has no disadvantageous influence on the practice of oil-painting; but the cupolas of Correggio at Parma are by no means favourable examples of the durability of fresco. Their decay appears, however, to have been owing to the former dilapidated state of the roofs and the penetration of damp, as the lower figures are better preserved. The fresco in the tribune of S. Giovanni was destroyed in enlarging that part of the church; part of the principal group, the Coronation of the Virgin, was fortunately saved, and was inserted in the wall of the library at Parma.

The foregoing are among the considerations which it is considered might induce Her Majesty's Commissioners to recommend the promotion and encouragement of historical painting in connexion with the rebuilding of the Houses of Parliament, while a hope may be here expressed that the example will be followed on other occasions. The employment of fresco, for a portion at least of the intended works, might be proposed conditionally, since it must necessarily depend on the evidence of inclination and qualification on the part of the artists, to work in that method.

No. V.

REPRESENTATION AS DISTINGUISHED FROM DESCRIPTION.*

THE question respecting the selection of fit subjects for painting, in the decoration of an important building, cannot be fairly considered without referring to the nature of the art itself, and the variety of its styles.

The general nature of the formative arts as distinguished from language or description, from which their subjects are often taken, is too familiar to require much comment. It may suffice to advert to those principles of representation which have been derived from such a comparison, and which affect the question proposed.

In a subject taken from description it is required that the impression conveyed should be as nearly as possible equivalent to that of the written narrative; and this translation (for such it is) can rarely be accomplished without some deviation from the letter of the original, in order to render its true meaning. It follows, that where it is absolutely

[* Extracts from a paper in the Appendix to the Third Report of the Commissioners on the Fine Arts, 1844, and from the notes to the translation of Goethe's "Theory of Colours."— London, 1840. — ED.]

impossible for painting, which represents what passes in a single moment, and in one view, to convey an impression equivalent to a given description, that description cannot be said to furnish a good subject for representation.

Sir Joshua Reynolds gives an instance of an ill-adapted subject of this kind which was recommended to a painter. "It was what passed between James II. and the old Earl of Bedford in the council which was held just before the Revolution.* This is a very striking piece of history; but so far from being a proper subject, that it unluckily possesses no one requisite necessary for a picture; it has a retrospect to other circumstances of history of a very complicated nature; it marks no general or intelligible action or passion," &c.

The question here is not whether a good picture could be made out of two persons in conversation;

* Dalrymple's Memoirs. The following appears to be the incident referred to:—"As soon as James entered the city, he summoned an assembly of the peers to ask their advice, and to make an apology to them for not having called a Parliament. In passing to the council he met with a shock, perhaps as severe as any he had felt. Meeting the father of the unfortunate Lord Russell, the old Earl of Bedford, who had offered 100,000*l.* for his son's life, but which the king, when Duke of York, had prevailed with his brother to refuse; he said to the earl, 'My lord, you are a good man; you have much interest with the peers; you can do me service with them to-day.' 'I once had a son,' answered the earl, sighing, 'who could have served your majesty upon this occasion.' James was struck motionless."

but whether the precise story could be told. It is evident that it could not; and that the representation could not be equivalent to the description.

Among the changes which a subject may undergo in being transferred from description to representation, may be mentioned the omission of circumstances which, however forcible and satisfactory in words, would be disagreeable when presented to the sight. One well-known instance may suffice. In the Æneid the serpent coils itself twice round the neck of Laocoon. Suppose some Mæcenas, more conversant in poetry than in art, were to employ a sculptor or painter to copy this description literally; the admirable lines of Virgil, thus rendered, would produce a tasteless work of art.*

Not only forms, but colours, however agreeable in description, might be unpleasant to the sight; and the assumption that poetical allusions of this kind may be literally adopted in pictures has sometimes led to false criticism. In this respect, the means of the two arts differ widely. An image is more distinct for the mind when it is compared with something that resembles it. An object is more distinct for the eye when it is compared with something that differs from it. Similarity is the auxiliary in the one case, contrast in the other. The poet succeeds best in conveying the impression

* See Lessing, "Laokoon oder über die Grenzen der Mahlerei und Poesie," where this subject is fully treated.

of external things by the aid of analogous rather than of opposite qualities: so far from losing their effect by this means, the images gain in distinctness. Comparisons that are utterly false and groundless never strike us as such if the end is accomplished of placing the thing described more vividly before the imagination, or of conveying an impression of excellence. In the common language of laudatory description the colour of flesh is, "like snow mixed with vermilion;" these are the words of Aretino in speaking of a figure of St. John, by Titian. Numerous instances of the kind might be quoted from poets: even a contrast can only be strongly conveyed in description by another contrast that resembles it: as

> "Her beauty hangs upon the cheek of night,
> Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear."
>
> *Romeo and Juliet.*

On the other hand, whenever poets have attempted the painter's method of direct contrast, the image has failed to be striking, for the mind's eye cannot see the relation between two colours; to say nothing of the vagueness of their names. It has been already observed that words, necessarily presented in succession, are, strictly speaking, inadequate to the expression of harmony, the elements of which must be simultaneous.

Poets, to avoid competition with the painter's elements, or rather to attain their end more com-

pletely, have often judiciously taken refuge in moral qualities when describing forms and colours. By means of such associations hues which would be far from agreeable to the eye become pleasing. All light, positive colours, light-green, light-purple, white, may be thus recommended to the mind's eye; no degree of dazzling splendour is offensive, and no repose is required.

To insist, therefore, that a work of art should be absolutely faithful to the description from which it is taken (though that description might be excellent in itself, and true to the conditions of eloquent language,) might be sometimes fatal to its success.

The restriction of representation to a single moment, and a limited space, has suggested various liberties in painting and sculpture, in order to render the impression, as nearly as possible, equivalent to that of the story represented. For example, in Raphael's celebrated painting, representing the possessed boy brought to the apostles while Christ was transfigured on Mount Tabor, the painter has taken the liberty of bringing the figures of the Redeemer, and those who were with him on the Mount during his transfiguration, near, and has reduced the mountain to a hillock.

This is an instance of a great liberty taken with space, but not with time, since the two events represented may be supposed to have happened together, and it is evident, that in order to be

equivalent to the description, the scene of the transfiguration required to be prominent. The ultimate object of the artist in proposing such a subject to himself it is not necessary here to inquire into.

The liberties taken with time are much more common, but they are only considered excusable in historic art, when they greatly increase the force of the impression, and render it on the whole a more intelligible translation of the description. It is to be observed that the great artist above mentioned, in most of his Scripture subjects, does not depart in this respect from the letter of sacred history.

The liberties taken with the personal appearance of historical characters are thus defended by Reynolds. "How much the great style exacts from its professors to conceive and represent their subjects in a poetical manner, not confined to mere matter of fact, may be seen in the cartoons. In all the pictures in which the painter has represented the apostles, he has drawn them with great nobleness; he has given them as much dignity as the human figure is capable of receiving; yet we are expressly told in Scripture that they had no such respectable appearance; and of St. Paul, in particular, we are told by himself, that his bodily presence was mean. A painter must compensate the natural deficiencies of his art. He cannot, like the poet or historian, expatiate, and impress the mind with great vener-

ation for the character of the hero or saint he represents, though he lets us know, at the same time, that the saint was deformed, or the hero lame. The painter has no other means of giving an idea of the dignity of the mind, but by that external appearance which grandeur of thought does generally, though not always, impress on the countenance; and by that correspondence of figure to sentiment and situation which all men wish but cannot command. The painter ought to give all that he possibly can, since there are so many circumstances of true greatness that he cannot give at all. He cannot make his hero talk like a great man; he must make him look like one."

The precept here given, in its application to historical painting, properly so called, may require to be received with caution; and the great authority referred to by Reynolds may be quoted on the other side as having attained the grandeur of his style, at least without losing himself in vapid generalisation, a defect so frequent in the later Italian schools. The rule is chiefly applicable to works of large dimensions, and requiring to be seen at some distance; but in paintings which admit of nearer view, the power of expression has often triumphed over unpleasing forms.

The liberties taken with costume are notorious, and are frequent among the great masters. Their sole object seems to have been to be true to the imagination. Even in the instance of Nicholas

Poussin — the most remarkable of the older painters for attention to costume — the air of remote antiquity, the classic probability which he contrives to give to his works, are addressed quite as much to the imagination as to the erudition of the spectator; and the artist's materials are selected or modified according to their applicability to this larger purpose, for he is frequently incorrect in the mere scholarship of costume. The rage for classic research in some modern (now nearly extinct) continental schools often led to the reverse of this principle, viz. the habit of addressing the understanding rather than the imagination. The weapons of Homer's warriors were chiefly tempered copper*, not steel; but as few persons are accustomed to associate this circumstance with their conception of Homeric battles, the representation (for such representations have appeared) was unsatisfactory, though true.

The extent of modern antiquarian researches, in increasing information in archæology, has increased the number of critics; and to be true even to the imagination, now, a painter requires to be more attentive to the details in question than the earlier artists were. But the character of art is unchangeable, and the materials of costume are still to be considered subservient to the end of representation. Notwithstanding the gross errors in costume, which

* Millin, Minéralogie Homérique, p. 133.

are observable in the pictures of the Venetian and Flemish masters, it will be remembered that such errors have scarcely weighed in the balance when their merit as artists has been considered; and that, on the other hand, the most rigid correctness in costume would never of itself be sufficient to constitute a fine picture.

The practice of the great Italian painters resembled that of the artists of antiquity. Their first care was to avoid as much as possible a *modern* appearance and ordinary associations in dress; and this was frequently extended even to contemporary subjects and portraits. In selecting obsolete costumes they were at least sure that taste could not alter respecting them, or that if any reaction took place it would be in favour of such costumes. The dress being once removed from the immediate *present*, they were not particular about the precise period of a subject, and were guided chiefly by the demands of the art. Thus Giorgione appears to have dressed his figures in costumes older than those of the period in which he lived.* Raphael, who willingly introduced the flowing robes of the clergy and religious orders (unaltered from much earlier times), and the armour and habiliments of Swiss guards (uncommon from their foreign appearance), took great liberties with the general costume of the period in which he lived.

* The story of Rembrandt's collection of old costumes indicates the same taste.

Many of the licences above adverted to are regulated by the style of the art ; different subjects, indeed, suppose different modes of imitation, and even different dimensions. The imitation of the details of dress is one of the points which characterise works of art of moderate size; for the fullest means of imitation which painting can employ are, strictly speaking, most appreciable in such dimensions, as coming within the range of most distinct vision; and hence, the more complete those means, the more the introduction of accidental circumstances is compatible with due gradation. But, as dimensions and distance increase, or, as the scale of effect which represents the differences of nature, from whatever cause, becomes less full, or less appreciable, the objects represented require to be selected with an especial regard to their importance, beauty, and character.

No. VI.

SCULPTURE.*

THE restrictions imposed on the selection and treatment of subjects by the nature of the art itself, are much more rigid in the case of sculpture, which, strictly speaking, has but one style. The principle, that in proportion as the means of representation become circumscribed the imitation of inanimate objects becomes less satisfactory, is here especially applicable. The surface of life, either alone, or with drapery that indicates the form or adorns it, was with the Greek sculptors the chief object of imitation.

As in considering the claims of painting it is desirable to keep the highest style in view, though that style may be seldom attainable or seldom applicable, so in sculpture, a description of the practice of the ancients in their best works may not be out of place here, although it is too certain that modern habits and associations may often render it impossible to conform to the example.

It will be needless to dwell on the more obvious requisites of sculpture; the necessity of beauty in an art which can conceal nothing; the necessity of balancing the mere weight, and the degree of

[* From a paper in the Appendix to the Third Report of the Commissioners on the Fine Arts, 1844. — ED.]

symmetry in composition which results from that law; or the general principles (applicable to all the arts of design) of proportion, breadth, gradation of quantities, and contrast. It is proposed here chiefly to consider its *specific* style*, as more directly affecting the question of the selection of subjects fitted for it. For this purpose it will be necessary to ascend to its simplest elements.

The art of sculpture imitates with more or less completeness the real bulk of objects, their substance and form, but it does not imitate their colour. This restriction is the result of a comprehensive view of imitation; it is by no means from actual impossibility, but because the end of genuine illusion would be defeated by the attempt. A statue coloured to the life might deceive the spectator for a moment, but he would presently discover that life and motion were wanting; and the imitation would be consequently pronounced to be incomplete. Whatever is attempted by the arts, the perfection of style requires that the imitation, however really imperfect with reference to nature, or even

* The *general* style of the formative arts is the result of a principle of selection, as opposed to indiscriminate imitation. It consists, therefore, in qualities which may be said to distinguish those arts from nature. The *specific* style of any one of the arts consists in the effective use of those particular means of imitation which distinguish it from the other arts. Style is complete when the spectator is not reminded of any want which another art or which nature could supply. [See the Essay, No. 11. — Ed.]

with reference to other modes of representation, should suggest no want. The imagination then assents to the illusion, though the senses are far from being deceived.

As it is well known that the ancients occasionally added colour to their statues, it will be necessary to consider this difficulty at once. It may be observed that the colours employed were probably never intended to increase the resemblance of the object to nature, but that they served only to insure distinctness, or were merely for ornament. The gilding of the hair, for instance, however objectionable, would not be condemned on the ground of its being too close an imitation of real hair. So also the colour which was sometimes appropriated to the statues of Mercury, Bacchus, and Pan, would never be mistaken for flesh. Sometimes the accessories only were coloured. An epigram, ascribed by Heyne to Virgil, alludes to a statue of Amor with party-coloured wings and a painted quiver. But the mixed materials of some of the statues even of Phidias, the gems inserted for eyes, and the silver nails of other figures*, all indicate a practice

* See Pausanias, who, in his description of Greek statues, gives a variety of such examples. Three kinds of embellishment were sometimes added to complete the work of the sculptor; three classes of decorators finished the statue — the varnisher, the gilder, and the tinter. Letronne (Lettres d'un Antiquaire à un Artiste. Paris, 1840, p. 399.) quotes a passage from Plutarch (De Glor. Athen.) where these different artists are referred to: ἀγαλμάτων ἐγκαυσταὶ, χρυσωταὶ καὶ βαφεῖς. Letronne

which the taste of modern artists condemns, and which was, perhaps, condemned by the ancient sculptors also. In many cases religious devotion may have interfered to decorate a statue, as paintings of the Madonna are sometimes adorned with real necklaces and crowns. In the instance of the chryselephantine statue of Minerva by Phidias, the Athenians insisted that the materials should be of the richest kind.

Notwithstanding these facts and the difficulty of altogether exculpating the artists, it is quite certain that it was impossible to carry further than they did those judicious conventions in sculpture, which supply the *absence* of colour. It may therefore be presumed that such supposed absence of colour was, with the ancients, an essential condition of the art; and it will appear that this condition materially affected its executive style.

It would indeed soon be apparent that the differences which colours in nature present—for example, in the distinction of the face from the hair, and of the drapery from the flesh—require to be met in sculpture by some adequate or equivalent differences; hence, the contrasts adopted were either greatly conventional or dictated such a choice of nature as was best calculated to supply the absent quality.

and Müller are of opinion that the draperies and accessories only were painted and gilt, the undraped portions of the statue being merely varnished.

It will first be necessary to inquire what degree of resemblance was proposed in the imitation of the living form. In the fine examples of sculpture the surface of the skin, though free from minute accidents, is imitated closely. The polish is, however, uniform; first, because any varieties in this respect could not be distinguished at a due distance; and secondly, because a rough surface on marble in the open air is sure to hasten the corroding effect of time by affording minute receptacles for dust or rain, while in interiors the rough portions would be soonest soiled.*

In polishing the marble the ancient sculptors were sometimes careful not to obliterate or soften too much the sharp ridges of the features, such as the edges of the eyelids, lips, &c. These sharpnesses were preserved, and occasionally exaggerated, in order to insure a distinct light and shade on the features at a considerable distance. Such contrivances, it is almost needless to say, were in a great measure dispensed with in statues intended for near inspection. Lastly, the marble received a varnish (rather to protect the surface than to give

* The Laocoon is often quoted, on the authority of Winkelmann, as an instance of an antique work finished with the file; but a careful inspection shows that the marks of the instrument are subsequent to the polish. It is probable that such marks are no older than the period when the group was discovered, when this mode may have been adopted to clean it. The Farnese Hercules was unfortunately so treated before it migrated from Rome to Naples.

it gloss), the ingredients of which may be gathered from a passage in Vitruvius.*

These modes of finishing the surface are detailed because it is of importance to remark that this was the extent of the imitation. The varnish, doubtless, would give mellowness to the colour of the marble; but it may be assumed that a statue thus finished was nearly white.

The flesh is always the master-object of imitation in the antique statues; the other substances, drapery, armour, hair, or whatever they may be, are treated as accessories, to give value and truth to the naked. It follows that the differences of colour which, as before observed, are met by some equivalent differences in the colourless marble, are solely expressed in the accessories—the principal object imitated being nearest to reality, and never, as it were, abandoning its supremacy in this respect. But it will have been seen that, when all was done, the marble flesh was in itself a convention, owing to the absence of colour; it was therefore for the artist to take care that the spectator should never be reminded of this want.

Drapery, which in nature may be supposed to be different in colour, as it is certainly different in texture from the flesh, was made to differ from the appearance of the flesh accordingly, especially when they were in immediate juxta-position. Thus, although in marble the mere colour of the drapery

* L. 7. c. 9.

is the same as that of the flesh, it is generally so treated that the eye is enabled, instantly and at a considerable distance, to distinguish the two, and nature is thus successfully imitated. The requisite contrast is generally effected by means of folds varying in direction and quantity according to the portions of the figure with which they are in contact. The difference which the colours of nature exhibit is thus represented by another kind of difference, but which is still in nature.

Simple and allowable as this principle of imitation seems to be, it was rejected by the Italian sculptors of the seventeenth century, as their practice shows. In their works the flesh is often confounded with flat drapery, from a mistaken endeavour to give the breadth which is desirable in painting. It is to be remarked that the broad masses of drapery which occur in the antique are always so contrived as to leave no doubt respecting the substance. For example, when flat masses cross the limbs they cannot easily be confounded with them.

Again, in nature it is possible for hair to be so smooth as to offer scarcely any difference in surface from the flesh. Indiscriminate imitation has also had its advocates in this particular, and many Italian statues of the period referred to want colour to make the hair distinct from the face. The hair in the antique, whether crisp in its undulations, like that of the Venus of Milo; or soft like that of

the Medicean Venus; or bristled in unequal masses, like that of the Dying Gladiator; or elaborately true, like that of the Lucius Verus; or whether even, as in the early Greek works, it is represented by undulating scratches, or by a series of regular curls*; it is always more or less rough and channelled so as to present a surface, sometimes from its deep shades almost approaching a mass of dark, opposed to the face. All this is only a judicious choice, and a skilful translation of nature.

In these, and similar modes of distinction, as the accessories are treated in a relative and comparative manner, they cannot possibly be so near to nature as the flesh. This relative effect is generally compatible with the admission of some or more of the proper qualities of the accessories; but it sometimes happens that, in them, the relative effect alone is studied. Thus, a detached portion of the hair of the Laocoon, or of the Dying Gladiator, would hardly be recognised for what it represents; the same might be said of detached portions of some draperies. This large principle of imitation is not to be recognised in less perfect examples of the art. The sculpture of the time of Hadrian, even when of colossal size, and requiring to be seen at some distance, is indiscriminately

* In coins, resembling dots or globules. The expression of Burke, "The artificial infinite is composed of multitude and uniformity," was the sole principle with the early artists. In the outlines on the vases, sand strewed on the ground is expressed by a line of regular dots.

finished throughout. The master-object of imitation is consequently less effective.

The possibility of imitating drapery literally accounts for some of the practices of the ancient sculptors which, though judicious, have been sometimes objected to. Difficult as it may be supposed to be to imitate a flexible substance in stone, the surface which drapery presents in a quiescent state may be copied in marble so as to produce illusion. For, the surface being completely rendered, we have only to suppose the original drapery to be white in colour, and the imitation in white marble is at once on a level with all absolute facsimiles. The consequence would be, that in a white marble statue with drapery thus literally copied from nature we should immediately discover that the flesh was *not* of the natural colour — a discovery which we should never be permitted to make. The flesh, from wanting colour, sets out with a departure from nature, and the conditions of imitation require that no other substance should surpass it in resemblance to its prototype: as before observed, this generally follows when the accessories are treated in a merely relative manner. We should therefore pause before we condemn the occasional squareness, straightness, and parallelism of the folds in some antique specimens, since this treatment not only serves to distinguish the drapery from the undulating outline and roundness of the limbs, but gives it that degree of conven-

tional treatment, which prevents it from surpassing the flesh in mere truth of imitation. Thus the art is true to its own conditions, and this, at whatever cost attained, is necessary to constitute style.

The very different practice of the sculptors of the 17th and 18th centuries, Algardi, Bernini, Puget, Le Gros, and others, justly celebrated as they are on many accounts, can hardly be supposed to have existed without a decided disapproval of the system of the ancients. A French sculptor, about the middle of the last century, pronounced the draperies of the antique to be "without taste, without intelligence, and without truth." This criticism of Falconet, often repeated in his Essays, is quite consistent with his defence of absolute imitation, which, as has been seen, is most possible or rather only possible, in subordinate objects.

The restrictions which the above considerations impose on the absolute imitation of drapery cannot, however, extend to the treatment of the hair; not only because an exact imitation of the substance is here next to impossible, but also because it is even more unlike its original in colour than the face is; and hence, provided it preserve its relative effect, it may safely do its utmost in imitation without any danger of being truer than the marble flesh. Its varieties of execution would only depend (as in the instances before given) on situation, dimensions, the nature of the material, and the character of the subject.

With reference to dimensions and distance it is to be observed that there might be cases where, from the smallness of figures as compared with the distance at which they could be seen (suppose the pediment of a temple), the conventions in question would be inadequate to produce the apparent distinction of substances without such exaggeration as would be altogether inconsistent with the imitation of nature. Under such circumstances the contrivances in question do not keep pace with the distance, and it is probable that these were the cases where the aid of colour was resorted to.

It must be evident that, without colour, the expedients, however violent, which are intended to correct the indistinctness of distance, must, sooner or later, cease to produce any effect; and the point at which the Greek sculptors stopped seems to have been defined by the law of never suffering such conventions to interfere with the apparent imitation of nature while the work was seen at the distance *which its size required.* The consequence is, that works which for two thousand years were placed at such a height that their finer merits could not be appreciated, have been found worthy to be enshrined as gems in modern museums — have been found to combine a perfect intelligence of the specific style of sculpture with an unsurpassed truth of imitation.

The purpose of the present remarks requires,

however, that this specific style should be kept chiefly in view.

The *colour* of white marble, which, it appears, may sometimes increase the illusion of drapery, is not the only quality by means of which some substances may resemble nature more literally than the marble flesh can. The qualities of smoothness, of hardness, of polish, of sharpness, of rigidity, may be perfectly rendered by marble. It is not easy to conceive a greater accumulation of difficulties for a sculptor aiming at the specific style of his art to contend with, than the representation of a personage in the modern military dress. The smoothness and whiteness of leather belts, and other portions of the dress, may be imitated to illusion in white and smooth marble. The polish, the hardness and sharpness of metal, and the rigidity even of some softer materials, are all qualities easily to be attained in stone; yet the white marble flesh is required to be nearest to nature, though surrounded by rival substances that, in many cases, may become absolute facsimiles of their originals. The consequence of the direct and unrestrained imitation of the details in question is, that the flesh, however finished, looks petrified and colourless, for objects of very inferior importance, even to the buttons, are much nearer to nature. The objection to these details, from their unpleasant or unmeaning forms, is here left out of the account.

The boldness with which the ancient sculptors

overcame similar difficulties is remarkable. Thus, to take an extreme case, *rocks*, which in marble can be easily made identical with nature (thereby betraying the incompleteness of the art in other respects), are generally conventional in fine sculpture; witness the basso-rilievo of Perseus and Andromeda, and various examples in statues where rocks are introduced for the support of the figure. In order to reduce literal reality to the conditions of art, the substance, in this instance, is, so to speak, uncharacterised; the same liberty is observable in sculptured armour as treated by the ancients; sharpness is avoided, and the polish does not surpass, sometimes does not equal, that of the flesh. In like manner, steps, or any portions of architecture, are irregular and not geometrically true in their lines and angles; on a similar principle, probably, the inscriptions on the finest antique medals are rudely formed: for it cannot be supposed that the artists who could treat the figures and heads so exquisitely could have been at a loss to execute mechanical details with precision.

In Canova's monument to the Archduchess Maria Christina at Vienna, (in many respects a fine work of art,) figures are represented ascending real steps and entering the open door of a real tomb, all executed with a builder's precision. It is plain that, to keep pace with the literal truth of these circumstances, the figures should

at least have colour, life, and motion. The want of all these is injudiciously made apparent by the comparison in question, and some pains are taken to convince the spectator that he is looking at marble statues.

In the antique, on the contrary, it will generally be found that the employment of conventional methods (as opposed to the more direct truth of representation) increases in proportion as objects are easily imitable, and consequently in danger of interfering with the higher aim.

The contrivances which are intended to give the impression of reality to the master-object of imitation, as exemplified in the best works of the ancients, thus point out the course to be pursued in the difficult treatment of statues in modern costume. The general principle, it is repeated on the authority of such examples, is never to suffer literal truth in the accessories to remind the beholder of the unavoidable incompleteness in the more important object of imitation.

The principles of that general style which is common to all the Fine Arts confirm the above view. According to those principles, art, as such, can never be literally confounded with nature. The very existence of imitation (however successful its result may be) depends on the condition that its means should be different from those of nature. But sculpture at the outset gives substance for substance. A common quality being thus un-

avoidable, art is immediately on the watch to maintain its independence by laying a stress on all the differences in its power that are consistent with imitation. Accordingly, the *form* of the substance assumes peculiar beauty; it is thus removed at least from ordinary nature. The *colour* (in the imitation of the human figure) is altogether different from nature. Other qualities in the substance being given, the opposite qualities in nature are, in like manner, selected for imitation. The *lifelessness*, *hardness*, and *rigidity* of the material, point out the elastic surface of life and flexible substances, as the fittest objects for the artist's skill. Imitation is complete when we forget that the marble is white, lifeless, and inflexible. But if we are compelled to remember this by the introduction of qualities common to nature and to the marble (mere substance being already common), the first principle of art, as such, is violated. The selection of qualities differing from the nature of the material in which they are imitated has, necessarily, its limits. Flying drapery, foliage, water, clouds, smoke, are opposed, but may be too much opposed, to the artificial substance to render imitation possible. The spectator is in this case again reminded of the material.

The ultimate opinion on such questions is in involuntary harmony with our impressions respecting the works of nature. In the vast chain of created things the ambiguous links are the least satis-

factory to us, because they are imperfect approaches to more characteristic examples, and remind us of a completeness which is not their own. There would be as little doubt in art, on such questions, if its various styles were sustained by artists equal to each other in ability. In inquiries like the present this condition is always supposed. It is not the ill-advised license only which is to be allowed to be recommended by genius; equal powers are to be granted to vindicate the perfection of style.

The above considerations may now be pursued with reference to bronze: this material is commonly preferred for costume subjects; partly, perhaps, because it may be supposed to differ more equally and consistently from the colours of reality; but even this may be questionable, for many surfaces, and even hues, will surpass the resemblance of the flesh to nature. It is also to be observed, that certain thin materials which cannot be expressed in marble are capable of being copied to illusion in bronze, and, as usual, at the expense of the master-object of imitation.

As the details of statues, whether of marble or of bronze, become indistinct at a moderate distance, and especially in the atmosphere of London, it is essential that their general outline should be intelligible. For this purpose bronze, though from the darkness of its colour possessing less command of light and shade than marble, is preferable, because the encumbering supports that are necessary

in marble may be entirely dispensed with in metal on account of the strength of the material, leaving the essential form more distinct.

A complicated or contorted attitude would thus be considered unfit for bronze figures intended to be seen at some distance, since the mere outline, which would alone be visible, would be unintelligible. But, on the other hand, a statue, even in this material, intended for an interior, where it could be nearly and minutely inspected, can require no such restrictions. Thus the bronze (in the Capitol at Rome) of the boy pulling the thorn out of his foot, was evidently intended, from its attitude as well as from its size, to ornament an interior.

A colossal statue, of whatever material, when intended to be seen chiefly at a distance, is treated on the larger principle, and will not generally be found to have its attitude accommodated for a near view also. But when a figure of colossal dimensions can only be seen near, common sense seems to demand that the head should be inclined downwards, otherwise the face must necessarily be foreshortened, and imperfectly seen. Much has been said of the imitation, intended by Phidias, of the *Homeric nod* in his statue of Jupiter at Olympia; but when we consider the colossal size of the figure, and the limited distance at which it could be seen in the interior of the temple, we at once see a sufficient reason why the head should look down.

It has been seen that the differences of colour which nature presents, and by which we are chiefly enabled to distinguish objects, are met in sculpture by more or less conventional means; but the comparison of these differences can extend only to the component surfaces of one and the same statue. A figure entirely draped beside one that is not so, like the group called Papirius and his mother (or Orestes and his sister), seems to extend the scale, but in truth, except where the different substances are in contact, the opposition, as a representative of colour, is scarcely apparent. In general, therefore, it may be affirmed that it is beyond the powers of sculpture to distinguish one entire figure from another by any convention which can represent a contrast of colour. The difference of complexion between a Hercules and an Omphale, for instance, is not attempted; hence the limitations of the art in grouping; for notwithstanding the similarity of colour, it is necessary that the eye should distinguish every figure without effort.

Even in single figures the distinction between the drapery and the flesh is chiefly expressed where they meet, and are immediately opposed to each other; in other parts remote from the flesh the drapery often exhibits very nearly the same surface as the naked. Again, where the drapery clings to the form (a contrivance particularly objected to by Falconet), it is the limb, rather than the drapery, which is apparent. There are, however, examples

in the antique where the entire surface of the drapery is plaited or channelled, so as to represent a general difference in its whole mass to the surface of the skin. Some figures of Amazons are thus treated; and in most female statues the drapery, being thin in texture, with minute folds, offers a constantly roughened surface, and insures a general opposition to the naked. Examples of this treatment occur among the Elgin marbles.

But the powers of the art in these conventional contrasts may be said to be exhausted in one figure. The means of distinction that remain when colour is abstracted, are, difference of form, and difference of place or position (sufficient separation). As regards difference of form, the sculptors of the Parthenon — in addition to the varieties of sex and age, draped and undraped figures — found a resource in the introduction of the horse, the most perfect of quadrupeds; the forms of which, particularly in the pediments, contrasted agreeably with those of the human figures, and prevented the monotony sometimes observable in the architectural sculpture of other schools. The mere separation of the figures and groups is unavoidable in sculpture applied to the *tympana* of porticoes or in alto-rilievo; but while the figures remained white, the ancients thought it necessary to insure the distinctness of the outlines by colouring (generally blue) the white

marble background on which they were relieved.*

If such precautions were deemed advisable in sculpture consisting of almost isolated figures, in order to insure distinctness, it is easy to comprehend why the ancients avoided extensive groups "in the round." The same qualities must be constantly recurring, and the want of that variety which nature presents would not only be fatiguing to the eye and attention, but the identity of hue would remind the spectator of the material; a proof that the art would have attempted too much.

The most unobjectionable mode in which the ancient sculptors treated a group is, perhaps, exemplified by the Laocoon. The figures are, in a great measure, distinct, but yet sufficiently united to form a whole. In the group of the Boxers, which belongs to the class called *Symplegmata* by Pliny, the circumstance of the figures being only two in number (which appears to have been a condition of every group of the kind †), does away, in some measure, with the objection; even here it may be questioned whether the absolute similarity of colour does not remind us that they are of

* See R. Wiegmann, "Die Malerei der Alten." Hanover, 1836, p. 111.

† The term *Symplegma* has been employed by modern writers as meaning a group of any kind; but it is certain that it was originally applied only to close compositions, such as the Boxers, Hercules and Antæus, &c.

marble — a proof that the art has gone to its limits. The group of Dirce tied to the horns of the Bull by Zethus and Amphion (called the Toro Farnese), may be objectionable on the same grounds, though the figures are treated as much as possible as separate wholes, so as to give the utmost distinctness; but the necessity of this very precaution may be considered an evil, except in the application of sculpture to architecture.

These observations are purposely confined to the specific style of sculpture. It is to be remembered that great excellencies may exist where this style is not rigidly attended to; and objections to such examples on the above grounds are not to be understood to extend to high imitative or inventive merits which belong to the artist of genius. With this explanation it may be remarked that the group of the Rape of the Sabines, by Giovanni da Bologna, is not according to that discretion of the Greek artists which is observable in the Laocoon. In the Rape of the Sabines a very near inspection is necessary even to trace and distinguish the figures. The result is wonder at the power of the artist. In the antique group the subject strikes us forcibly; but the artist does not appear. The group of the Laocoon was not calculated to be seen on every side. Compositions which admit of this are rare in the antique, and belong to the decline of art, for sculpture had passed the period of its perfection before its connexion with architecture ceased. The

sculptors of the Bernini school considered it desirable that a group should have eight points of view. The consequence would be, that no one of the eight could predominate, or be forcible in its impression.

Thus the Greek sculptors seem to have made every consideration bend to the specific style of their art; and however narrow the limits, to those limits they confined themselves. It is commonly supposed that the manners and habits of the ancients, and the scantiness of their dress, are sufficient to account for the practice of their artists: this may be shown to have been at least an exaggerated view.

"It is certain," observes Visconti*, "that the costumes of Greek and Roman statues are not in general those of the time, but belong to an earlier period." The liberty of representing heroes undressed is well known. "No hunter ever went to the chase so little attired as the Meleager of the Vatican. No warrior ever appeared in the field like the hero miscalled the fighting gladiator. Achilles was not present at the council of Agamemnon as he is represented in a basso-rilievo of the Capitol; Laocoon did not officiate as a priest naked. The care taken by Ulysses to appear with decorum before the daughter of Alcinous proves that Jason could not have presented himself naked at the court of Æetes, or at that of the king of Corinth, when he conversed with Medea or Creusa, although in vari-

* Opere, vol. iii. p. 47.

ous rilievi he is so represented." "The statues of distinguished Grecians, Pindar, Euripides, Demosthenes, Aristotle, and others, which are undoubtedly iconic, are dressed only in a large mantle, thrown in a picturesque manner over the figure. This costume was never that of the Greeks; some of the Cynics only had adopted it."

Even in later times, and when the actual costume is somewhat familiar, "the statues of Romans, such as Pompey, Agrippa, Augustus, are naked, or with drapery only, as an unimportant accessory."

"The ancient sculptors were less free when they represented events of their own time on triumphal arches or other public monuments, but, not to mention the introduction of allegorical figures, they still took great liberties with the costume of the period. The details of dress which, from whatever cause, happen to be introduced in the figures on the Trajan column prove how much was suppressed on other occasions. Other works of the time of Trajan, executed perhaps by the same artists, offer not the slightest trace of these details." In the rilievi in question the soldiers wear a sort of neckcloth (*focale*), and the upper open part of their tunics is furnished with a row of buttons.

As the art declined the costume was represented more faithfully. "The *læna* (later known by the name of *lorum*), though belonging to the ancient Roman costume, first appears in works of art of the time of Septimius Severus. The consuls are

rudely represented on the ivory diptychs of a later period in all the pomp of their official dress. But in works of a better age no Roman magistrate is ever represented with the *prætexta*, no senator with the *laticlave**, no patrician with the *crescent* on his sandal; although these were respectively the badges of their rank. The *umbo*, or knot of the toga, on the breast, is in like manner represented in no statue. It is scarcely necessary to add that the principal garments are worn next to the skin in statues, whereas the writers of both languages make mention of *indusium*, *subucula*, *hypobasis* and *hypodytes*."

It was observed that costumes were represented more faithfully during the decline of art. It was the same in the ages of its immaturity. In Egypt the dresses were indiscriminately copied; and in the same proportion imitation was imperfect, and taste undeveloped. The example is not without its use in other respects, for when the extreme warmth of the climate is considered, the multifarious Egyptian costumes are sufficient to prove that the civilised inhabitants of Greece and Italy were at least equally clad. The naked colossal statue of Pompey would have been as strange to the Romans, had they not been accustomed to similar works of art, as Canova's

* The stripes and borders of the *trabea*, and the *prætexta* (varieties of the toga), and the *latus clavus* on the tunic, being only coloured additions to the dress, would hardly be found in good sculpture. They are, however, represented by indented lines on later and inferior works.

naked colossal Napoleon was to the Parisians. In the Panathenaic procession at Athens, as in all processions, the pomp of dress was a main part of the show. In the sculptured representation of this scene, the elder functionaries have one loose garment becomingly thrown over the naked figure; and the Athenian cavaliers wear a still lighter mantle, which, sometimes flowing from their shoulders in the breeze, shows their forms entirely undraped. The women, however, from motives which the Athenians never lost sight of, are fully but gracefully clad. With this exception, the *peplon* of Minerva was not more shorn of its embroidery, in the marble, than the greater part of the figures were of their real costumes. It is necessary to compare, in imagination, the judicious liberties of the sculptor, producing as they did the finest work of its kind in existence, with the ship bearing the *peplón*, the veiled women, the dresses of ceremony worn by the official personages, and the armed cavalry accoutred for a field-day. It is necessary to compare the reality with the work of art in order to be convinced that the difficulties of reconciling the style of sculpture with costume are not peculiar to modern times. We may be convinced at the same time that the Greeks, having once defined the essential nature of the art (in which was comprehended the condition of an especial regard to decency), pursued it without any other compromise

whatever.* Their definition was rational. Genius laboured in the best direction, and perfection was the result.

The lapse of ages can make no alteration in such principles. It is still unreasonable to look for all the details of history in the arts which are the sisters of poetry; it is still unquestionable that each must seek its proper excellence in order to assert its rank in the scale of human attainments; and that in proportion as the sphere is circumscribed, the characteristic aim which constitutes style requires to be guarded with especial jealousy. In considering the question whether art should be sacrificed to mere facts, or these to art, it should

* "The ancient sculptors," observes Visconti, "employed drapery for three reasons, and with three different views—from a motive of decency, as a simple ornament, and as a symbol or characteristic indication.

"They employed draperies from motives of decency in the statues of women and goddesses. The sculpture of the ancients represents no individuals of the sex entirely unclothed, except when the artist has supposed the pretext of the bath, or in the case of the ocean deities; on which account Venus (Aphrodite) and the Nymphs are represented undraped. Other exceptions are extremely rare. It may even be affirmed that the ancient sculptors were more reserved in this respect than the moderns."

The sculpture of the ancients, in addition to the end proposed by particular subjects, especially aimed at that department of moral culture which relates to outward manners and decorum. The artists seem to have considered that beauty would have been incomplete without grace and modesty; and their statues of gods and heroes, as Winkelmann has shown, never appear in an attitude or occupation which is not calculated to inspire respect.

be remembered that historical details can be preserved by other records than by representation, and by other modes of representation than by the highest; but that the essential objects of the Fine Arts can be attained by no other means except their own.

It has been the object of the foregoing observations, by a reference to examples in a limited branch of imitation, to invite attention to the modes in which nature may be approached, without sacrificing what has been called the independence of style. The masterworks of sculpture are especially calculated to show that the two aims are quite compatible. They illustrate the great condition that art, though distinct from reality, should still maintain an equality with it. The rivalry supposes excellence; but an excellence attained by different means. This change of means, this adopted form or language, is the universal and indispensable condition of the imitation proposed by the Fine Arts. The peculiarities of that new form, the points in which it differs from nature, are supposed to be defined and recognised at the outset. The distinction from reality, which they establish, may vary in degree, as it necessarily does in kind, with each mode of representation; but it is, in every case, required to be so palpable that whatever illusion afterwards takes place, must be the voluntary illusion of the imagination.

The first question, then, in examining the style of a given art, is — in what does this difference of means, as compared with nature, consist? The answer may, for the present, be confined to sculpture. It is agreed, then, or it is a *convention*, that a colourless, hard substance shall be the material with which the sculptor shall imitate the perfection of life. His means are, by this primary condition, effectually distinguished from those of nature; and it remains for him to cheat the imagination (not the senses), into the pleasing impression that an equivalent to nature can be so produced. He may, therefore, imitate the characteristics of life closely; his select representation, however faithful, is in no danger of being literally confounded with reality, because of the original conventions, viz. the absence of colour, and the nature of his material. But it is not the same with the imitation, in this art, of many other surfaces: as already observed, a rock in sculpture and a rock in nature can be identical; it may, therefore, be sometimes necessary to imitate the reality less closely, or even, in extreme cases like that now adduced, to depart from nature. The reason is obvious: the degree of resemblance to reality which is attainable in the principal object of imitation — the surface of the living figure — is, from the established convention, limited; and it is desirable that the spectator should forget this restriction. He is, therefore, by no means to be reminded of it by greater reality in other, and necessarily inferior, parts of the work.

In painting, it is sometimes objected that inferior objects are more real than the flesh. The defect is great: but there is this difference between the two cases; in painting, the inferiority in the imitation of the flesh may be only from want of power in the artist; in sculpture, the perfect resemblance of the flesh to nature is impossible, in consequence of the absence of colour. The literal imitation of subordinate objects is, for this reason, more offensive in sculpture than in painting. A manifest defect in the art seems more hopeless than a defect in the artist.

Thus, where a difference between the means of art and those of nature already exists (having been originally agreed on), the resemblance to reality may be safely most complete. Where such prescribed conventions cease, the resemblance is contrived to be less direct. The extent to which nature would require to be departed from, in the treatment of some subordinate objects in sculpture, and the constant difficulties that must arise in balancing the claims of such particulars (from the nature of the subject and other considerations), may have been among the reasons which induced the Greek sculptors to get rid of them as much as possible. When, however, such circumstances are introduced in fine sculpture, they are so treated as not to surpass the degree of resemblance to nature, which the master object of imitation presents. Hence, the works in question, as has been shown

from various examples, clearly teach the principle on which the illusion of the imagination depends. They prove, also, that the recognised conditions of a given art are, in truth, its safeguard, and the source of the artist's inspiration. For those conditions not only tend to prevent the inferiority of his imitation to reality, but invite him to arrest appearances and impressions, which may compensate for the deficiencies of his means. Those means being (in the sculptor's case especially) limited, either the choicest facts in nature, or the completest triumph over the means of the art, are required in order to maintain the equality proposed. But if the circumstances which the work has in common with nature are both trivial in themselves and expressed by the same means which nature employs, then art is in danger of merging in reality, and of suggesting the conviction, that it is, at best, superfluous. When facts are not rare, the language in which they are expressed (if they must be expressed at all) most requires to be new.

That new language, it is repeated, is supplied by the conditions agreed on — the postulates which are the groundwork of imitation. The finest examples of mere art are those which successfully appeal to human experience and sympathies by means which, outwardly, are in a great measure different from those of nature.* The representation of

* Compare Reynolds's 13th Discourse.

space on a flat surface is thus estimated highly in the mere art of painting: illusion in such a quality, assisted by the conventional treatment of circumstances more easily imitable, cannot be too complete. In like manner a close resemblance to nature is judiciously sought by the sculptor where his material seems to promise it least; while he suppresses literal imitation when the qualities of that material greatly coincide with those of the object to be represented. The principle is the same in all the arts; for whether directly imitative or not, all set out with restrictions, and all excite wonder and delight when those restrictions cease to be felt as such. It is this which wins our admiration in musical compositions; when the language of imagination and feeling is recognised in sounds, that, intrinsically and even conventionally, have no meaning; in poetry, when the free variety of thought and expression compels us to forget an almost unvarying form or rhythm; and in architecture when the union of fitness and character (the attribute of the most perfect productions of nature) is accomplished in a new creation.

In pursuing the analogies here considered, it is necessary to compare mere art with art — the form, as such, of the one, with the form of the other. Thus, in comparing sculpture and poetry together, the parallel conditions are to be sought in the strictly corresponding departments. As sculpture, in reference to nature (to repeat an observa-

tion before made), gives substance for substance, so poetry gives words for words. Accordingly, the form of poetry is, by agreement or convention (similar in principle to that which dictated the conditions of sculpture), effectually distinguished from the form of ordinary language. And it will now be seen that the limitations of poetry, in such outward characteristics, are more definite and more comprehensive than those of sculpture; for, whereas the material of marble may sometimes coincide literally with that of substances in nature, the form of poetry never can entirely coincide with that of ordinary language. This greater liability of sculpture to be confounded with reality certainly adds to its difficulty; since the doubtful cases which may be left to the taste of the sculptor are often settled by an immutable rule for the poet.

Horace, in describing his journey to Brundusium, intimates that the name of a town is omitted because it was not, by its form, compatible with his verse.* It is easy to suppose cases where the omission of certain particulars might be required in sculpture, in accordance with the conventions of that art. But those conventions are less binding, and the modern artist would, perhaps, rather infringe a vague rule than suppress a fact. The example above quoted is a strong case; for there can be no question that, in an historical and anti-

* Mansuri oppidulo, quod versu dicere non est. (Sat. v.)

quarian point of view, the omission is to be regretted. The poet might perhaps be censured for not telling his story in prose; but having chosen verse, he could not violate its laws. Here, again, the principle is applicable to all the Fine Arts. It is not to be supposed that they can rival science. Whatever knowledge they may themselves require is a means only to another end, and they injudiciously remind us of their restrictions if they attempt what ordinary description can do better.

To conclude: it appears that, of all the Fine Arts (except perhaps theatrical representation), sculpture is most liable to be partially confounded with reality. Of the attributes of material objects, it first possesses substance and form; and when in addition to these qualities it happens to have colour and surface in common with nature, it is evidently in danger of sacrificing its general consistency, and the illusion which art proposes. Again, in consequence of the absence of colour, identity with nature is impossible in the chief object of imitation, the living figure. These two circumstances — the impossibility of absolute resemblance to nature in the principal object, and the extreme facility of such resemblance in many inanimate substances — define the style of sculpture; a style fully exemplified in the works of the ancients. On the authority of those works, it has been shown that this art, on the one hand, aims at the closest imitation of the living figure in its choicest forms; for

such can best compensate for the want of colour, and enable the art to rival nature. In subordination to this, its first aim, sculpture affects the imitation of elastic and flexible substances generally. On the other hand, it is distinguished by the greater or less conventional treatment, or the entire omission of all particulars which are more literally imitable than the flesh. The instances of such conventional treatment, including alterations of costume and omissions of various circumstances, which are observable in the sculpture of the Greeks, are perhaps the most remarkable liberties, with a view to consistency of style, which the history of art presents.

No. VII.

BASSO-RILIEVO.

The Italian term basso-rilievo, or the French bas-relief, is commonly applied to any work of sculpture connected more or less with a plane surface or background, and in this general sense is opposed to insulated detached figures, or sculpture in the round. In its more particular meaning, basso-rilievo, low or flat relief, is usually appropriated to figures which have a very slight projection from the ground. Alto-rilievo, on the other hand, is not only rounded to the full bulk, but has generally some portions of the figures quite detached; and mezzo-rilievo (a style between the two), although sometimes rounded to a considerable bulk, has no part entirely unconnected with the plane surface or ground. A more accurate definition of the styles to which these designations refer will result from the explanations that follow. The terms used by the Greeks and Romans to distinguish these kinds of relief cannot perhaps be determined with complete accuracy; and it may be here remarked, that those writers are mistaken who suppose the word *Toreutike* (τορευτική) to have been applied by the Greeks exclusively to alto-rilievo, since Heyne, and indeed other writers before him, have proved that the

term was appropriated to carving, and, chiefly, chasing in metal, in any kind of relief. The Latin word corresponding with it is *cælatura*. The Greeks seem to have employed the term *anaglypta* to denote works in relief in general; and the *ectypa scalptura* of Pliny (xxxvii. 10.) also means work in relief. The term *glypta* (from γλύφω, *to cut into, to hollow out*), with other words formed from the same verb, appears to denote sculpture in the concave sense, intaglio. Herodotus in a passage of his second book (cap. 138.), where we have little doubt that he is speaking of the sunk Egyptian reliefs (which will be mentioned in another part of this article), couples a word formed from the verb γλύφω with the word typus (τύπος): typus itself (perhaps) always means a work in relief, properly so called. (See Herod. iii. 88. Cicero ad Atticum, i. 10.) Italian writers of the time of Vasari, it appears, used the term mezzo-rilievo for the highest relief, basso-rilievo for the less prominent, and *stiacciato* for the flattest or least raised.

Whatever may have been the origin of this kind of sculpture, and there is no doubt of its being very ancient, an idea will be best formed of its style, as practised by the Greeks, by supposing it to be derived from the partial insertion of a statue in a perpendicular plane. Alto-rilievo is often literally nothing more than this. Applied to a flat surface, the disposition of the

limbs and the actions of the figure become necessarily more or less parallel with that surface, in order sufficiently to adhere to it. The attitude is thus, in a certain degree, adapted or selected. In inserting or embedding a figure in a flat ground, it is obvious, that although it may be buried *less* than half its thickness, as in alto-rilievo, it cannot be buried *more*, nor indeed (the structure of the figure strictly considered) quite so much, without ceasing to present the real boundary or profile of the form. In the less prominent kinds of rilievo it is therefore still required that the outline should present the real form, and this principle in its further application excludes, in a great measure, the *unreal* forms of perspective and foreshortening, which would suppose that the objects are no longer parallel with the surface on which they are displayed. Attempts at foreshortening must in most cases fail to satisfy the eye: the work can only be seen in front, and the appearance it presents is therefore required to be at once intelligible, for no uncertainty can be removed by an inspection from another point of view, as in walking round a statue. The bulk, or thickness, need not, however, be real, provided it appear so. The compression of the bulk, which constitutes the various degrees of mezzo and basso-rilievo, thus follows the compression or flattening of the action, the characteristic of alto-rilievo. Lastly, the modifications of which this branch of sculpture was susceptible

were adopted, as we shall see, according to the varieties of light, situation, dimensions, and use.

The Greeks, as a general principle, considered the ground of figures in relief to be the real wall, or whatever the solid plane might be, and not to represent air as if it was a picture. The art with them was thus rather the union of sculpture with architecture than a union of sculpture with the conditions of painting. That this was founded on rational principles will be evident from the following considerations. The shadows thrown by figures on the surface on which they are relieved at once betray the solidity of that surface. In the attempt to represent, together with actual projection, the apparent depth of a picture, or to imitate space, figures which are supposed to be remote are reduced in size; but although thus diminished in form, they cannot have the strength of their light and shade diminished; and if deprived of shadow by inconsiderable relief, they cease to be apparent at all when the work is seen from its proper point of view, that is, at a sufficient distance; having no distinctness whatever in the absence of colour, but by means of light and shade. Indeed, the art thus practised, has no longer an independent style, and only betrays its inferiority by presenting defects which another mode of imitation can supply. A passage in Vitruvius proves that the ancients were not unacquainted with perspective; the same author states that perspective scenic decorations

were first employed by Agatharcus at Athens, in the time of Æschylus. However greatly the science may have been improved by the moderns, this may be sufficient to show that the absence of perspective in Greek bassi-rilievi was not from an absolute ignorance of its principles, but from a conviction that they would be misapplied in sculpture.

In carefully keeping within the limits, however narrow, which defined the style of rilievo, the great artists of antiquity failed not to condense into that style the utmost perfection compatible with it, while the various applications of the works suggested abundant variety in their treatment and execution. The British Museum contains unquestionably the finest existing specimens of this branch of sculpture in the rilievi which decorated the Parthenon, or Temple of Minerva, at Athens. We have here to consider the judicious adaptation of their styles for the situations they occupied; but in regard to their general excellence as examples of art, it may also be well to remember that these sculptures were the admiration of the ancients themselves. Seven hundred years after they were produced Plutarch spoke of them as "inimitable works."

The figures which adorned the pediment are separate statues, although in their original situation, casting their shadows on the tympanum, they must have had the effect of bold alti-rilievi; the

circumstance of their being thus completely detached must have given the greatest distinctness to their forms, and as they occupied the highest part of the building, their gigantic size and complete relief made them fully effective at a considerable distance. The sculptures which adorned the metopes, or spaces between the triglyphs, are in alto-rilievo. Those in the British Museum, represent-

ing combats with Centaurs, were taken from the south side of the building: the subjects were varied on the other sides, but they mostly related to the warlike exploits of the Athenians. It has been well observed that the subjects of combats, usually chosen for the metopes in Doric temples, afforded opportunities of composing the figures so as to produce diagonal lines, which effectually dis-

tinguished the groups from the architecture, and at the same time had the effect of reconciling the vertical forms of the triglyphs with the horizontal lines of the epistylium and cornice. The compositions in question all fully occupy the space destined for them, and are calculated, from their treatment and relief, to produce the utmost possible effect. These works, receiving the open light, were thus boldly relieved from their ground to insure the masses of shadow which make them conspicuous: the principle, applicable to external architecture, that projection commands shade, was thus extended to external decorations; and care seems to have been taken to keep the light on the figures as unbroken as possible, especially as the whole series of metopes occupying the external frieze was more or less crossed by the shadow of the cornice. This precaution necessarily limits the attitudes, for many actions equally natural with those adopted would have projected shadows on the figure itself, thus tending to confuse the forms. A statue which can be seen from various points, and sometimes in various lights, might thus be unfit as to its composition for that intelligible display in one view and under a constant light which rilievo requires.

On the principle that high relief is fittest for the open light, the rilievi of the temple of Phigaleia, which are also preserved in the British Museum, are bold in their projections. These

80192

works adorned the interior of the cella; but as the temple was hypæthral, or lighted from the open sky, the principles of external decoration were applicable. Had the temple been imperfectly lighted, a flatter kind of relief would have been preferable, and this leads us to consider the style of basso-rilievo, properly so called, the most perfect existing specimen of which is also in the British Museum. It adorned the external wall of the cella of the Parthenon, within the peristyle or colonnade, and was consequently always in shade: the strongest light it could ever receive would probably be the reflection from the pavement below when the sun was highest; but as reflected lights are uncertain, and may proceed from various points, the sculptures in question were calculated to be equally distinct in whatever direction the light was thrown. Their great elevation, and the peculiar angle at which they were seen, owing to the narrowness of the space between the exterior columns and the cella, may also be mentioned in considering the reasons which rendered projection unadvisable. That this confined view was not, however, the sole reason, may appear from the bold relief of the Phigaleian marbles, which, in the interior of the narrow cella of the temple they adorned, must have been seen, on the side walls, at a very inconsiderable distance compared with their height. The Phigaleian temple was built, according to Pausanias, by Ictinus, the chief architect of the

Parthenon; and although the sculptures are inferior, as works of art, to the generality of Greek specimens, their style of relief is precisely the point in which the architect may be supposed to have directed their execution.

As projection commands shade, so flatness commands light, and the flattest relief is hence fittest for an invariably dark situation. The same principle is observable in architecture in the treatment of mouldings in interiors, the form and projection of which differ materially from the corresponding members in the open light, and which are intended to be seen at a distance. The flatness which insures light would, however, be altogether indistinct and formless unless the outlines were clear and conspicuous at the first glance. The contrivance by which this is effected is by abruptly sinking the edges of the forms to the plane on which they are raised, instead of gradually rounding and losing them. The mass of the relieved figure being sometimes very little raised in its general surface, its section would thus almost present a rectangular projection. In many instances the side of this projection is even less than rectangular; it is undercut, like some mouldings in architecture which require to be particularly distinct, and thus presents a deeper line of shade. But if the figure can thus command distinctness of outline, notwithstanding the inconsiderable light it may receive, it is obvious that its lowness or flat-

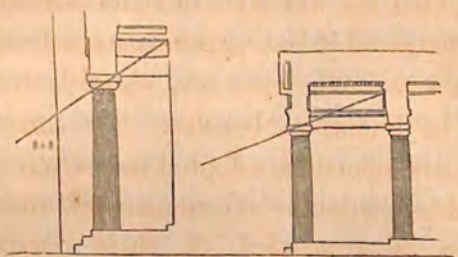
ness of relief will, in such a light, greatly aid its distinctness: above all, this contrivance gives the work thus seen in an obscure situation the effect of rotundity. Indeed, it is a great mistake to suppose that the flat style of relief was intended to appear flat, and it is a great mistake to apply it in situations, as in the open air, where it must appear so, and be indistinct besides. The conventions of the arts are remedies, adopted in certain situations and under particular circumstances, and are supposed to be concealed in their results: their ultimate resemblance to nature, and their successful effect in those circumstances, are the test of their propriety and necessity.

The absence of all convention in alto-rilievo (as opposed to the flat style) thus fits it for near situations, if not too near to expose it to accidents. The excellent sculptures which decorate the pronaos and posticum of the Temple of Theseus, although under the portico, are in bold relief. They were not only nearer the eye, and seen at a more convenient angle than the flat rilievi of the cella of the Parthenon, but the reflected light which displayed them would necessarily be much stronger. It is also to be remembered that only the end porticoes, where the sculpture could be more conveniently seen, and was better lighted, were decorated with rilievi; the side walls of the cella were unornamented, and undoubtedly bold relief would have been less adapted for them.

The Temple of Theseus was built about thirty years before the Parthenon; and it is not impos-

Lateral portico of the Parthenon.

End portico of the Temple of Theseus.



sible that the satisfactory effect of the flat rilievi on the cella of the latter might have suggested a similar treatment, or some modification of it, in the Temple of Theseus, had it been erected later.

It may be observed in general, that alto-rilievo can seldom be fit for interiors, not only from its liability to accident, but from the difficulty of displaying it by the full light which it requires. A superficial light, especially if in a lateral direction, necessarily throws the shadows of one figure on another. Instances of this occur in some of the palaces in Rome where works of sculpture have been injudiciously placed. A room, for example, lighted in the ordinary way will have its walls (at right angles with that occupied by the windows) adorned with a frieze in considerable relief; the figures

nearest the light consequently project their shadows so as to half conceal the next in order.

The conditions of proximity and distance, as well as the quantity and direction of light, were carefully attended to by the Greek sculptors, and suggested new varieties of relief. The end of the art, as regards execution, is accomplished when the work is distinct and intelligible at the distance whence it is intended to be viewed. Hence the conventions which are intended to correct the defects of distance, of material, want of light, &c., are evidently unnecessary where the work admits of close inspection. The style of mezzo-rilievo, which in its boldest examples presents about half the thickness of the figure, is, on many accounts, least fit for a distant effect; the figure is nowhere detached from its ground; at a very little distance its shadowed side is lost in its cast shade, and its light side in the light of its ground; the outline, in short, soon becomes indistinct; but the semi-roundness of the forms is directly imitative, and thus again the absence of all conventional treatment fits the work for near situations. The style was preferred to alto-rilievo in such cases, as the latter would have been more liable to accidents, and would besides, in a greater degree, deform the outline or profile of any object which is circular in its plan. The figures which adorn sculptured vases are thus in mezzo-rilievo: these works probably ornamented interiors where any indistinct-

ness in their distant effect or in an unfavourable light might be obviated by closer inspection. Two specimens may be seen in the second room of the Gallery of Antiquities in the British Museum. The celebrated Medicean and Borghesan vases, the finest known examples, are in like manner ornamented with mezzo-rilievo. The above considerations are applicable to all works, however unfit for a distant effect, which can, or in their original situation could, only be seen near. Even the mixed style of relief in the sculptures which occupy the internal sides of the Arch of Titus at Rome would hardly be objected to, since the objects represented are distinctly seen, and can only be seen, at the distance of a few feet. The style of semi-relief (much purer than that of the Arch of Titus) adopted by Flaxman in front of Covent Garden Theatre may be defended on the same principle, since the utmost width of the street is hardly a more distant point than a spectator would retire to in order to see them conveniently. The still flatter style which has been introduced on the exterior of several buildings in London cannot, however, be defended on any grounds; and there can be no doubt, from the reasons adduced, that bold relief is generally fittest for the open light. The mezzi-rilievi on the miniature choragic monument of Lysicrates (casts from them are in the British Museum) may be admitted to have been fitly calculated for their situation, because they must have

been seen near; but there was in this case an additional consideration to be attended to; the building is circular, and alto-rilievo was avoided in order to preserve the architectural profile: on the other hand, the frieze of the small temple of Victory, which was rectangular, was adorned with alti-rilievi; and in this case it appears that they did not even extend to the angles (where they might have deformed the outline). The objections to sculpture on monumental columns will be obvious from these considerations. It has been remarked, that in attempting to preserve the architectural profile, as in the Trajan column, and its modern rival in the Place Vendôme at Paris, the sculpture thus slightly relieved soon becomes indistinct; but in point of fact this indistinctness would not be obviated, at a considerable height, even by alto-rilievo, the figures being necessarily small, while the evil is only increased by substituting the dark material of bronze for marble.

We proceed to consider the varieties of style in this art as affecting composition. In rilievo, and in sculpture generally, (a colourless material, or a material of only one colour being always supposed,) it is evident that shadow is the essential and only source of meaning and effect. In works placed in the open air, and visible in one point only, as in the case of alto-rilievo, a certain open display of the figure is generally adopted; the shadows, or rather the forms which project them, are so dis-

posed as to present at the first glance an intelligible and easily recognised appearance, and the impossibility of changing the point of view, or changing the light, as before observed, limits the attitudes more than in a statue, and, as will also appear, more than in a basso-rilievo. For in the latter,

however distinct the outline, in which the chief impression and meaning of the figure reside, the shadows within the extreme outlines are in a great measure suppressed; it is, in fact, by their being so suppressed that the general form becomes distinct. This is also the case when one form is relieved on another; it will be found that the nearest object is very much reduced and flattened, in order that its shadow may not interfere with

the more important shadows of the outlines on the ground, and hence it may often happen that the nearest projection is the least relieved. It will thus be evident that, owing to this power of suppressing the accidental shades and preventing them from rivalling or being confounded with the essential ones, the choice of attitudes becomes less limited, and many a composition which in full relief would present a mass of confusion from its scattered and equally dark shades, may be quite admissible and agreeable in basso-rilievo.

Accordingly, the attitudes of statues, which are generally unfit for alto-rilievo, frequently occur in the flat style. Visconti even supposes that certain figures in the bassi-rilievi of the Parthenon suggested the attitudes of celebrated statues afterwards executed; as, for instance, the Jason, or Cincinnatus, and the Ludovisi Mars. As a remarkable proof how much the attitudes were limited in alto-rilievo as compared with the flat style, it may be observed, that the contrasted action of the upper and lower limbs, which gives so much energy and motion to the figure, is perhaps never to be met with in the fine examples of alto-rilievo, whereas in the flat style it is adopted whenever the subject demands it. In the following sketch of an early Greek basso-rilievo, representing Castor managing a horse (from the third room of the gallery of the British Museum), the action of the upper and lower limbs is con-

trasted, as is the case in all statues which are remarkable for energy and elasticity of movement:

the statue called the Fighting Gladiator may be quoted as a prominent example. This disposition of the lower limbs, or the alternate action, in which one of the arms would cross the body, never occurs in alto-rilievo, because the shadow of the arm on the body or of one of the lower limbs on the other could then no longer be suppressed, as it is in this case, but would rival the shadows of the whole figure on the ground. Among the metopes of the Parthenon, the Phigaleian marbles, and the alti-rilievi of the Temple of Theseus, there is not a single instance of the contrasted action alluded to; while in the two latter examples, the contrary position, or open display of the figure, repeatedly

recurs, even to sameness. It must however be admitted, that this open display of the figure, although not presenting the most energetic action, is as beautiful as it is intelligible, and hence the finest exhibitions of form were quite compatible with the limited attitudes to which the sculptors thus wisely confined themselves. The objections which compelled this limitation being however entirely obviated in basso-rilievo, by the power of suppressing at pleasure the shadows within the contour, we find the fullest advantage taken of the latitude which was thus legitimately gained.

A better example cannot be referred to than the flat rilievi already mentioned from the cella of the Parthenon. The subject represents the Pana-

thenaic procession, and although no perspective

diminution is admitted, several equestrian figures are sometimes partly relieved one upon the other. The confusion which results from the number of similar forms in the repetition of the horses' limbs, as well as in the actions of the horsemen, must be admitted; but perhaps the subject is thus better expressed than by a simpler arrangement, and this treatment contrasts finely with the single figures. In a procession of horsemen moving two or three abreast, we are at once aware that the figures are similar, and the eye is satisfied, as it would be in nature, not in searching out each individual figure as if it had a separate principle of action, but in comprehending the movement and the mass, for one indicates the whole. Where the figures thus cross each other they are treated as a mass; the outline of the whole group is distinct and bold, being more or less abruptly sunk to the ground, but the outlines which come within the extreme outline are very slightly relieved. In short, the principle here applied is precisely the same as that observable in a single figure in the same style of relief: the outline of the whole form is distinct, or rather most distinct where it is most important, and the internal markings are seldom suffered to rival it, but are made subservient to this general effect. The relative importance of the objects is, indeed, the only consideration which is suffered to interfere with this principle; thus loose drapery is some-

times but little relieved on the ground, while a significant form is now and then strongly relieved even on another figure. In comparing the slight varieties of treatment in these rilievi, it is to be remembered that the end porticoes were a little wider than the lateral colonnades. It is undoubtedly to this circumstance that the difference of treatment alluded to is to be referred; the figures in the end friezes are more separated from one another, and consequently somewhat more relieved than the compact processions on the side walls.

The fact that these bassi-rilievi, like most of the sculpture of the ancients, were partially painted, has been purposely left out of the account, because the very contrivances resorted to are calculated to supply the absence of colour. The custom, in the best age of Grecian art, of painting architecture and sculpture may be defended or excused elsewhere; it may be, however, here remarked, that while the ancient sculptors added colour after having employed every expedient which could supply its want, the moderns, in altogether rejecting it, often fail to make use of those very conventions which its absence demands.

It appears that the principle of suppressing the relief within the extreme contour which, with the strong marking of the outline itself, mainly constitutes the style of basso-rilievo, was employed by the ancients in works of considerable relief, in interiors, in particular lights, and probably at

some distance or elevation. The real projection which works, thus strictly belonging to the class of bassi-rilievi, may sometimes present, points out the essential difference between basso and mezzo rilievo. A work, even if in very slight general relief, which has the parts that are nearest, the most relieved, belongs to mezzo-rilievo; while a work which has the nearest parts least relieved, constitutes basso-rilievo, whatever its general projection may be. In the former, the outline is thus *less* apparent than the forms within it; in the latter, the outline is *more* apparent than the forms within it. The early Greek and Etruscan rilievi, which, however flat, have the nearest parts the fullest, while the outline is scarcely, if at all, rectangular in its section, have thus the principle of mezzo-rilievo. They are even fitted for near inspection, and cannot be said to present any unsatisfactory convention; for the bulk, however really thin, is proportionate in its relief, and is so far directly imitative, inasmuch as the eye consents to a diminished scale of bulk as easily as to a diminished scale of height, while the indistinctness of the outline has the effect of rounding the form. Such works are, besides, fitted for near examination, because they can scarcely command any shadow. Various specimens may be seen in the British Museum.

The antique vases of Arezzo were ornamented with figures in this kind of relief. Certain silver

vases mentioned by Pliny were of the same description. The Egyptian intaglio, for so it may be called, rather than rilievo, belongs to the same style. The Egyptian artists, instead of cutting away the background from the figure, sunk the outline, and slightly rounded the figure, on the principle of mezzo-rilievo, within the hollow. Thus no part of the work projected beyond the general surface, and the architectural profile was preserved. There are, however, many very ancient examples at Thebes of figures slightly relieved from the ground, somewhat on the principle of basso-rilievo as practised by the Greeks — that is, with the nearest parts least relieved, and with outlines rectangular in the section. Many of them, probably, in their original situations, and when the buildings were entire, ornamented interiors. Some Persian rilievi, in the British Museum, approach the same style. The Egyptian rilievi were painted in brilliant colours, and would have been ineffective in the open light without such an addition.

The distinctions of the three styles of relief, according to the Greek examples, may now be recapitulated. In the highest relief, however decided the shadows may and must of necessity be, on the plane to which the figure is attached, the light on the figure itself is kept as unbroken as possible, and this can only be effected by a selection of open attitudes; that is, such an arrangement of the limbs as shall not cast shadows on the figure

itself. In basso-rilievo the same general effect of the figure is given, but by very different means: the attitude is not selected to avoid shadows on the figure, because, while the extreme outline is strongly marked, the shadows within it may be in a great measure suppressed, so that the choice of attitudes is greater. Mezzo-rilievo differs from both : it has neither the limited attitudes of the first, nor the distinct outline and suppressed internal markings of the second: on the contrary, the outline is often less distinct than the forms within it, and hence it requires, and is fitted for, near inspection. Its imitation may thus be more absolute, and its execution more finished, than those of either of the other styles.

Most of the coins of antiquity are executed on the principle of mezzo-rilievo; and though often far bolder in their relief than modern works of the kind, are treated in a mode corresponding with their minute dimensions, which require close examination. The outline thus gradually rounds into the ground, and is never abruptly sunk, while the nearest parts are most relieved. Thus, conventional methods are always wanting in works that admit of close inspection, where the eye can be satisfied without such expedients. The comparatively strong relief of the heads on the ancient medals is again a contrivance for their preservation, and presents a new variety in the style of rilievo. Coins are exposed to friction, and the forms they

bear are thus liable to be soon effaced. The earliest means adopted to prevent this was by sinking the representation in a concavity, in which it was thus protected. This plan was soon abandoned, for obvious reasons; and the method ultimately adopted was that of *raising the least important parts most.* Accordingly, the parts that are rubbed away in many fine antique coins are precisely those which can best be spared; the hair has generally a considerable projection, so that the face and profile are often perfectly preserved after 2000 years: a better specimen cannot be adduced than the celebrated Syracusan coin representing the head of Arethusa or Proserpine. In addition to the propriety of its style, this head is remarkable for its beauty; and is classed by Winkelmann among the examples of the highest character of form.

The ordinary style of mezzo-rilievo was also used for gems, and indeed for all works in this branch of sculpture which required close inspection, and needed no conventional contrivance. A flat style of relief, which is sometimes observable in cameos, was adopted only for the sake of displaying a subject on a different coloured ground; the layers of colour in the stone employed, generally the sardonyx, being very thin. The difference of colour in the ground has, however, the effect of giving roundness to the figures relieved on it, as if, their whole effect becoming apparent, the internal markings disappeared. The figures on the Portland

Vase are treated on this principle; and as it was intended to imitate a precious stone (for which indeed it was at first taken), the thinness of the outer layer of colour is also imitated. Such works, however, reduced to one colour in a cast or copy, are totally wanting in effect. The impressions from intagli, or engraved gems, which were used for seals, are never in the flat style of relief; but however slightly raised, are on the principle of mezzo-rilievo as above defined. The gems of Dioscorides, the finest of antiquity, are in mezzo-rilievo, and often of the fullest kind; as for instance, the heads of Demosthenes and Io, and the figures of Mercury and Perseus. The same may be observed of other celebrated gems, such as the Medusa of Solon, the Hercules of Cneius, &c. It is supposed that the same artists who engraved on gems, and who frequently inscribed their names, also executed the dies for coins. The latter are among the finest antique works of art; but of the many thousand existing specimens there are but three or four which bear the names of the artists.

It was observed, that in the antique coins the least important parts are the most raised, and the reasons which dictated this practice limited the view of the head to the profile; but as the same reasons were no longer applicable in engraved gems, the impressions from which could be renewed at pleasure, the front, or nearly front view of the head was occasionally

attempted, and seems to have been preferred by Dioscorides and his school. The head of Io before mentioned, considered with reference to this specific propriety of its style, as well as with regard to its general merits, is placed by Visconti in the first class of antique engraved gems. Thus the most skilful artists of antiquity seemed to consider the style of any one of the arts to consist chiefly in those points which were unattainable by its rivals. It may be here observed also, that they generally limited their representation to the most worthy object, viz. the human figure, when the dimensions on which they were employed were necessarily confined. Indeed the principles of imitation itself were, so to speak, condensed, and true character often exaggerated as the materials appeared less promising; so that the genius of ancient art is as conspicuous in minute engraved gems as in colossal sculpture.

Mezzo-rilievo of the fullest kind was also fitly employed (as well as alto-rilievo, when in situations not exposed to accidents) to ornament tombs and sarcophagi. These works, placed in the open air, decorated the approaches to cities, as sepulchres were always without the walls. The Appian Way was the most magnificent of these streets of tombs in the neighbourhood of Rome, and must have exhibited, literally, thousands of sepulchral monuments. Though generally the work of Greek

artists, and often interesting from being copies of better works now lost, the haste and inattention with which such prodigious numbers were executed tended to degrade the style of their sculpture. In these rilievi, even in the better specimens, buildings and other objects are occasionally introduced behind the figures, thus approaching the spurious style of relief in which the effects of perspective are attempted to be expressed: a great variety, of various degrees of excellence, are to be seen in the British Museum. The greater part of what are called Roman bassi-rilievi are of this kind, and may be considered a middle style between the pure Greek rilievo and the modern Italian. It was from antique sarcophagi, fine in execution, but with these defects in style, that Niccola da Pisa, in the thirteenth century, first caught the spirit of ancient art. Many of the works from which he is believed to have studied are still preserved in Pisa. D'Agincourt gives a representation of one of the best. In imitating the simplicity of arrangement, and, in a remote degree, the purity of forms which these works exhibited, the artist was not likely to correct the defects alluded to which had been already practised in Italy and elsewhere. Various degrees of relief, background figures and objects, and occasional attempts at perspective, are to be found in the works of the Pisani and their scholars; yet their works, which are to be regarded as the infancy of Italian art, and which undoubtedly are rude

enough in workmanship and imitation, are purer in style than those of the succeeding Florentine masters, who attained so much general perfection in sculpture. The rilievi of Donatello are mostly in the style called by the Italians *stiacciato* (the flattest kind of mezzo-rilievo, according to the definition before given), which he probably adopted, as he worked in bronze, from the facility of casting; yet in such a style, commanding little distinctness from its inconsiderable projection, he introduced buildings, landscape, and the usual accessories of a picture. But this misapplication of ingenuity was carried still further by Lorenzo Ghiberti, in the celebrated bronze doors of the baptistery, or church of San Giovanni, at Florence, which exhibited such skilful compositions, in which the stories are so well told, and in which the single figures are so full of appropriate action. In these works the figures gradually emerge from the *stiacciato* style to alto-rilievo. They are among the best specimens of that mixed style, or union of basso-rilievo with the principles of painting, which the sculptors of the fifteenth century and their imitators imagined to be an improvement on the well-considered simplicity of the ancients. In these and similar specimens the unreal forms of perspective buildings, and diminished or foreshortened figures, which in pictures create illusion when aided by appropriate light and shade, and variety of hue, are unintelligible or distorted in a real material, where it is

immediately evident that the objects are all on the same solid plane. Even Vasari, who wrote when this mixed style of rilievo was generally practised, remarks the absurdity of representing the plane on which the figures stand ascending towards the horizon according to the laws of perspective; in consequence of which "we often see," he says, "the point of the foot of a figure, standing with its back to the spectator, touching the middle of the leg," owing to the rapid ascent or foreshortening of the ground. Such errors, he adds, are to be seen "even in the doors of San Giovanni." * Lorenzo Ghiberti, like other Florentine sculptors, first learnt the practice of his art from a goldsmith, and the designs of the artists who competed with him for the honour of executing the doors of San Giovanni were submitted to the judgment of goldsmiths and painters as well as sculptors.

The taste of the Florentines in basso-rilievo was thus greatly influenced by the prevalence of a style most applicable to the precious metals, in which a general sparkling effect is best insured by avoiding uniformly violent relief, which projects considerable shadows, and especially by avoiding unbroken flatness. The background is thus filled with slightly relieved distant objects, so as to produce every where a more or less roughened or undulating surface. The same end seems to have been attained in the antique silver vases, by the introduction of

* Introduzione, cap. x.

foliage. The style continued to be practised with occasionally greater absurdities than those before alluded to, and perhaps less redeeming excellence, till the close of the last century. The sculptor Falconet says of the antique bassi-rilievi, that "however noble their composition may be, it does not in any way tend to the illusion of a picture, and a basso-rilievo ought always to aim at this illusion." He leaves no doubt as to the literal meaning he intends by citing the Italian writers who applied the term *quadro* indiscriminately to picture and basso-rilievo. Sculpture in this country was indebted principally to Flaxman for the revival of a purer taste in the application of basso-rilievo to architecture. In works of decoration, intended to be executed in the precious metals, in which, as before observed, moderately embossed and general richness of surface is so desirable, in order to display the material as well as the work, he, however, united his own purity of taste and composition with an approach to the mixed style of relief practised by the Florentine masters, who, in this branch of sculpture, perhaps never equalled his shield of Achilles.

No. VIII.

PAINTING.*

STYLES AND METHODS OF PAINTING SUITED TO THE DECORATION OF BUBLIC BUILDINGS.

THE materials and dimensions of works of art, and the situations and lights for which they may be intended, have been termed *external conditions;* as distinguished from what are called the æsthetic elements of art.

Whatever be the external conditions, it is essential that the visible impression of the work should, under the circumstances, be as complete as possible. To insure this, not only the executive means, but the qualities to be represented, still require to be adapted or selected accordingly as conditions vary. Such adapted methods and resources constitute, in each case, a specific and appropriate *style.*

The question respecting the relation of painting to external conditions is not unimportant in considering the tendencies and claims of different schools. In general, the great masters seem to have inquired what the outward resources at their command could best effect. Such a habit, instead of confining, was rather calculated to enlarge their invention and to vary its forms. The result of their labours is the

* [From Papers in the Appendix to the Second and Fifth Reports of the Commissioners on the Fine Arts. 1843, 1846. — ED.]

sufficient ground of the world's admiration; but their docility cannot be duly appreciated without a reference to the local circumstances under which they worked.

An inquiry into the principles which may regulate such varieties of style appears to be especially requisite when painting is employed in the permanent decoration of public buildings, and may now be resumed with a more direct object, as particular localities in the new Houses of Parliament approach their completion.

First, it is to be observed that the adaptation of painting to a peculiar style of architecture is altogether a question of taste; even authority here fails, the greatest Italian masters never having been called upon to paint in a Gothic building. The example which is most applicable may be found in the works of Luca Signorelli, at Orvieto. In those works there can be no doubt that the artist's object was not to imitate, but to surpass the ruder productions which may have been executed, there or elsewhere, about the time when Italian-Gothic structures were erected. The Tudor style of Gothic (the style of the Palace at Westminster) is coeval with the highest development of art in Italy; and buildings erected in the time of Henry VII. or Henry VIII. might have been decorated by the hand of Raphael, had he accepted the invitation of the last-named monarch to visit England.*

* Dallaway's Walpole, vol. i. pp. 106—187.

The conditions now proposed to be considered are Dimensions, Situation, Light, and the Means of representation.

Large dimensions (in respect to the size of the entire painting) requiring a corresponding point of view; the height at which the work may be placed requiring a distant point of view independently of dimensions; imperfect light; and a method of painting possessing limited technical resources; are all to be considered as *causes of indistinctness**, requiring to be counteracted by such means as the method of art adopted can command; by such means as may appear preferable on general grounds, and which may render that method the fittest.

DIMENSIONS.

The relation between the longest dimension of a picture, and the distance from which the work requires to be viewed, may here require to be remembered. Once and a half the extent of the longest dimension (whether in width or height is immaterial) is the minimum of distance to which the spectator can retire in order to see the entire

* It is necessary to separate the *causes* from the *remedies* of indistinctness. A distant point of view, whether the consequence of the size of the work or of its situation, is in itself a cause of indistinctness; the size of the objects represented, if calculated to counteract this, is among the remedies, but, it will appear, may sometimes be overlooked.

surface. A circle cannot be embraced by the eye till the spectator retire to a distance equal to once and a half its diameter.

The law relating to the next condition is a necessary consequence of this. In some cases, the situation of a picture, independently of its dimensions, may require that the work should be viewed at a considerable distance. A painting measuring 14 feet high (such being assumed to be its longest dimension) would require, according to the foregoing law, to be seen at a distance of 21 feet. But if the lower edge of that painting be 26 feet from the ground, the spectator must retire to the distance of at least 60 feet before the eye can embrace it; for a painting equal to the whole height (40 feet) would require that distance.

This is the state of the case with regard to the compartments to be painted in the House of Lords. They are 26 feet from the floor, and may be reckoned to be about 14 feet high.*

At the end opposite the throne, the compartments are in recesses, and will be less fully lighted. At this end, therefore, all the causes of indistinctness above enumerated are combined, and may suggest a counteracting treatment in the paintings accordingly.

If, on the one hand, these considerations may

* The height of the compartments to the point of the (Gothic) arch is 16 feet; but the picture, properly so called, may be considered to terminate two feet lower.

furnish an answer to those who look for finish and minuteness of detail in specimens of fresco-painting intended for such a situation, it will be acknowledged, on the other, that the general treatment which may be calculated to correct the consequences of such conditions is a problem requiring some experience to solve. Fortunately, a reference is possible to the example of great artists under similar circumstances.

The instances are not frequent in which the size of the objects represented on a large surface is too small for the distance which the size of the entire painting requires. Raphael's first work in the Vatican, called the Dispute of the Sacrament, would be such an instance, if the room in which it is painted were large enough for the spectator to retire to the requisite distance. This is not possible; the whole of the painting cannot be embraced by the eye at once. The experiment can, however, easily be made with the engraving; the small size of the figures, as compared with that of the entire work, is then apparent. This imperfection, as is well known, was rectified by the artist in his subsequent works in the Vatican.*

SITUATION.

The next condition—situation, without reference to dimensions—presents greater difficulty. Michael

* In pictures of processions or unconnected incidents, the treatment here referred to cannot be considered a defect.

Angelo, after having painted the second compartment in the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel—about 60 feet high—appears to have found (as is, in fact, the case) that the size of the figures was inadequate to the distance at which they were to be seen. Condivi relates that the artist was on the point of abandoning the work because of some supposed defect in the lime; but the real cause of his temporary dissatisfaction is apparent in the subsequent change in his style; the figures in the compartments last executed being more than thrice the size of those in the first paintings.* Thus, whatever may be the dimensions of the picture (and in ceilings the compartments are commonly smaller than the distance would require), the size of the figures must always have reference to the place of the spectator.†

* The figures in the third compartment correspond in size with those in the first (either for the sake of uniformity or because the scaffolding immediately under the ceiling prevented the artist from making his observations earlier); the great change begins in the fourth. It is scarcely necessary to observe that large foreground figures are quite compatible with subjects requiring numerous actors. Michael Angelo's treatment of the subject of Haman is an example. The figures in the subject of Noah (the first ceiling compartment) might, even with the present composition, have been as large as those in the Creation of Eve. The circumstance of the ceiling subjects last executed requiring fewer figures, is, therefore, not to be considered the only cause of the change in the artist's style. See Condivi, Vita di Michelagnolo Buonarotti, Firenze, 1746, p. 27. The first edition of this work was published in Rome, 1553, in Michael Angelo's lifetime.

† The subjects in the small gold-coloured medallions in the

In this instance, therefore, although the space was scanned by an experienced eye, the means employed to counteract the effect of the existing conditions were miscalculated. The example shows the necessity of simplicity, magnitude, and distinctness for works requiring to be seen at a distance, and is also valuable as affording encouragement to our artists, should they think that their first efforts are in any respects not adapted to the place for which they were intended.

IMPERFECT LIGHT.

It will appear from the practice of another great painter, that imperfect light required, in like manner, magnitude, and simplicity of parts; while, at the same time, large masses of deep shade were avoided. The frescoes of Correggio, in the tribune of the church of S. Giovanni in Parma, were remarkable for these qualities. An idea may be formed of their general style by the portion which remains (now in the library at Parma), representing the Coronation of the Virgin. Pungileoni remarks *, that the figures generally were considerably larger than life, not so much in this

ceiling of the Sistine Chapel must have been, even at first, almost invisible from below. They are, however, to be regarded as mere decorations.

* Memorie Istoriche di Antonio Allegri, Parma, 1817, vol. i. p. 134.

instance on account of their distance from the spectator as because they were seen by a subdued, reflected light. The result was probably satisfactory; for objects require to be magnified, even when seen near, to counteract the indistinctness arising from want of light.

MEANS OF REPRESENTATION.

A fourth case is that in which the indistinctness to be guarded against arises from the means of representation. Fresco, with its limited scale of colour, cannot produce such varied effects as oil-painting; but a much stronger instance of defective means and of the excellencies which the necessity of counteracting them may induce, is to be found in the Cartoons of Raphael. The ultimate works for which the Cartoons served were copies wrought in tapestry — a mode of representation which, in the early part of the 16th century, was far from exhibiting even the comparative force of colour, and light and shade which it afterwards attained.* With a view to such faint transcripts, however, the great artist worked; he knew that his drawings would be transferred to them, and that in the tapestries alone, possibly, his designs might live.†

* The admiration of Italian contemporaries is intelligible, from the novelty of the manufacture at that period. The praises of Paris de Grassis, Vasari, and others, may be compared with the juster remarks of Gunn, Cartonensia, London, 1832, p. 35.; and Cattermole, the Book of the Cartoons, London, 1840, p. 21.

† Such designs were treated as mere working drawings; they were cut into slips for the execution of the tapestries, and were

Distinctness was nevertheless attained, without any sacrifice of such of the proper attributes of painting as were compatible with the means employed; and without any violation of probability. When we consider the great qualities which were combined with these requisites—when we find that such apparently unpromising conditions had the effect of raising even Raphael above himself, we can hardly refuse to admit that a due employment of limited means of representation may, at least, invite attention to the most important attributes of art.

In cases like those that have been adduced it is probable that the qualities which might fit the works for the circumstances of place, light, or materials for which they had been calculated, would be looked upon as defects on near inspection. The critics on art who have had the best right to express opinions founded on mere authority have ever dwelt on the necessity of inquiring what qualities are to be chiefly looked for in the subjects of our observation.* It may be requisite even for persons of cultivated judgment to bear in mind that the excellencies on which the reputation of great artists is founded are sometimes to be sought, not so much in

then thrown aside till again wanted for the same purpose. It was in this mutilated state that the cartoons at Hampton Court were first brought from Flanders. See Quatremère de Quincy and Longhena, Istoria, &c., di Raffaello Sanzio, Milan, 1829, p. 386.; and Trull, Raphael Vindicated, London, 1840, p. 9.

* See Reynolds, Fourth Discourse, and The Idler, No. 79.

the beauty of parts as in the grand or tasteful arrangement of the combined work, in the harmonious relation of entire masses, and the grace of entire forms. These qualities, which suppose the labour of the mind because they have reference to a whole, have ever constituted the worthiest criterions of merit, in the practice of the arts.

The influence of conditions, similar to those above considered, on every department of painting, may be traced in the best examples of the art; for, from whatever cause the sense of vision is imperfectly addressed, the selection both of qualities in nature and of the technical means fitted to represent them, will be influenced accordingly. But, before pursuing the inquiry, it may be desirable to state the elementary facts connected with visible distinctness, since these, though familiar in reference to nature, are more complex in relation to works of art seen under particular circumstances.

An object in nature can only be apparent by differing in its visible attributes from what surrounds it. The chief causes of this distinctness are—difference of Position; of Magnitude; of Light; of Form; and of Colour.*

Accordingly these attributes constitute the gene-

* Position is added by Dr. Whewell (Bridgewater Treatise, p. 130.). Abstract magnitude may be allowed to form a separate class, as spheres (for example) of different sizes may be said to differ rather in magnitude than in form.

ral resources of the artist; but it will be for him to inquire which of those means are more especially calculated, under any extraordinary conditions, to produce a result which, in regard to intelligible appearance, shall best satisfy the eye. The nature of the resources themselves will require to be first considered.

POSITION.

The relative position of objects — their differences of mere site and direction — considered with reference to the plane of vision, are either parallel with that plane or are at a greater or less angle with it. The differences of position may therefore be said to exist either superficially or in depth. In basso-rilievo, for instance, they are (either in the horizontal or perpendicular direction) superficial. In painting, on the other hand, they are chiefly sought and expressed in (apparent) depth; one of the great aims of this art being to conceal the flat surface and to represent space. Various practical and other considerations tend, however, to limit this attribute in works executed under conditions which involve indistinctness. Indeed, without reference to such conditions, it is to be remembered that, in subjects of figures, space is considered as a means to an end; viz. the expression of the story. The area which serves for this is often limited accordingly. On the other hand, in those branches of art where the objects represented are in

themselves less interesting the attribute of depth or inward extent becomes indispensable.

But it must also be apparent that varieties in the position of objects in depth, or in a direction not parallel with the plane of the picture, can be most full in works that admit of near inspection, because the expression of greater or less roundness and of receding space requires all the aid of delicate gradation. In proportion as that gradation becomes less appreciable, from distance, want of light, or other causes, the scale of such varieties, whatever be the size of the work, is necessarily limited. This is one of the reasons why landscapes, which especially and necessarily aim at the quality of depth, are unfit for a colossal size*; but the objection before noticed is also applicable.

The place or position of objects is to be considered not merely as regards their sites, relatively to each other, but as regards the ground plan of each alone. In basso-rilievo, as already noticed, the general direction of the object represented is contrived to be parallel with the plane on which it is displayed; but the aim and style of painting require that such parallelism should rarely occur.† The appearance of objects disposed so as not to be

* Such works are agreeable only when the indistinctness which is the consequence of their distance from the spectator is corrected by strong artificial light concentrated on the picture.

† It is, however, usual to treat architecture, when introduced

parallel with the plane of the picture is what is called foreshortening. The term is generally applied to figures, and to considerable (apparent) deviations from the abstract form; but painting is, strictly speaking, made up of such appearances. The plane on which figures stand, if seen at all beyond the ground line in pictures, is necessarily foreshortened: all objects exhibiting more than one side are more or less foreshortened.

The laws of perspective show that the foreshortened side of a building or other object is more rapidly narrowed, as it recedes from the eye, than the side parallel to the plane of vision; so that one only of the surfaces of objects may be said to be at last visible. Even when the foreshortened portions of remote objects are discernible in the linear sense, they are, unless of gigantic size, rarely intelligible, owing to the flattening effect of distance. Foreshortened forms are always, in regard to their mere outline, distorted forms; consequently, when seen only in their mass, they are sometimes not easily recognised. Hence, such appearances are introduced sparingly in pictures which cannot be closely inspected, or which, from whatever cause, are indistinctly seen. Under such circumstances the abstract idea of form becomes more necessary; and, in proportion as gradations of light-and-shade cease to be appreciable, the

in pictures in which figures are the principal objects, according to the rules of parallel perspective.

diversities of colour are more than ever needed. It was probably this necessity which led to the partial introduction of colour in the sculpture and architecture of the ancients.

The effects of nature above noticed teach that (intelligible) foreshortening is a *foreground quality*. It may be remarked that, in celebrated pictures, foreshortening is most usual in near objects. In Raphael's Transfiguration, for instance, the apostle in the left corner, and the woman kneeling near him are more foreshortened (in the limbs and extremities) than any other figures. Their action, or what may be called their ground plan, would be found to fill up or bridge the spaces between them and the other figures, in directions not parallel with the plane of the picture. The most distant figures, on the contrary, approach more nearly the flattened action of basso-rilievo.

But when the work can only be seen at a considerable distance, or under any conditions which involve indistinctness, foreshortening is limited even in foreground objects; and the style of the work is at last unavoidably reduced to the expression of abstract and permanent qualities. Examples of paintings seen even under such extreme conditions and treated on a principle calculated to counteract them are not wanting. The façade of many a church in Friuli exhibits a colossal St. Christopher, bearing his usual burden, and occupying the entire elevation of the white wall; on this the figure is

relieved by its local tint, deepened only to represent shadow. The principle is precisely the same as that of very minute representations, and no other mode could be so effective under the circumstances.*

The actors in a picture commonly front the chief object of interest; and as that object, whatever it may be, is generally contrived to be but little removed from the foreground, so it is for the most part in the nearer foreground that figures turn their backs to the spectator—an arrangement calculated to give depth to a composition. Among the drawings formerly belonging to Colonel Guise, and now preserved in Christ Church, Oxford, there is a sketch attributed to Raphael, accompanied by some explanations. The writer recommends that "those figures which are nearest to the spectator and to the point of sight should present their backs; those further removed, their sides, and so on in perspective; as if a circle were drawn and figures were ranged round it."†

* These colossal representations have reference to an ancient superstition among the Italian peasantry. The sight of St. Christopher, the type of strength, at any distance, is supposed to renovate the strength of the labourer. One of the paintings referred to has the following inscription:—

Christophori Sancti speciem quicumque tuetur,
Illo namque die nullo languore tenetur.

One of these rude figures is still visible in the neighbourhood of Cadore, the birth-place and frequent summer residence of Titian.

† Compare Burnet, "On the Education of the Eye." London, 1837. p. 44.

The spectator might either view this circle from without, or, if supposed to be himself within it, might see only a semicircle. In the latter case the nearest figures would present their sides to him, in the former, their backs. When the spectator stands before a semicircular composition of figures he may be said to complete the circle himself. This arrangement was adopted by the early Italian painters in their sacred subjects, and, from its fitness, was never abandoned by Raphael. The Madonna di Foligno and the Dresden Madonna are remarkable examples. The St. Francis in the first, and the Pope Sixtus in the other, point to the (real) spectator, and appear to intercede for him. The object, in this semicircular arrangement, appears to have been to mix up the living votary with the divine or sainted personages represented, and to make him feel in their presence.

But in more dramatic compositions, in which the spectator may be interested but not a party concerned, Raphael often adopted the picturesque arrangement above described; and after him it was unfortunately applied to altar pictures. The precept quoted cannot be understood to refer to such works; but perhaps for all other subjects it may be considered applicable. It would, however, be limited by the external circumstances more particularly dwelt on in these remarks, inasmuch as the most intelligible views of the figure are fittest for situations or conditions creating unusual indistinctness.

The relative position of objects in depth, involving, as it does, perspective appearances, is intimately connected with the question of gradations in magnitude, the subject next to be considered.

MAGNITUDE.

The differences of magnitude are either real *, as at one and the same distance; or may be only apparent, as the result of perspective.

It must be evident that gradations in magnitude will be more full and varied when they comprehend, if only in a limited degree, the perspective diminution of forms. The great Italian artists seem to have considered this essential to distinguish painting, however severe in style, from basso-rilievo, or abstract outline, in which the varieties of magnitude are real.† But in the works before referred to by Michael Angelo and Raphael this perspective diminution of figures is confined to narrow limits; partly because the technical means may have been wanting to mark the relative distances of objects when the work was seen under the conditions

* The term "real magnitude" is restricted to such superficial dimensions as have a permanent relation to each other. Under this category may be classed proportion and symmetry. On the distinction between proportion and symmetry, see the second volume of "Modern Painters," p. 67.

† The style of basso-rilievo, as generally practised by the Italians, was not strictly in conformity with this definition, as they injudiciously endeavoured to represent in it the effects of perspective. [See Essay VII. — Ed.]

required; but chiefly because figures much reduced in size cannot be consistently rendered expressive as actors or spectators. In the second compartment of the ceiling in the Sistine Chapel before mentioned, the effects of perspective (in the gradual diminution of figures) are expressed without restraint; but the indistinctness which was the consequence was probably among the causes that induced Michael Angelo to reduce the space in depth in the other compartments (as regards the figures) almost to the conditions of sculpture.* In Raphael's Transfiguration, the figures on the Mount are supposed to be distant with reference to those below; but, had they been so represented, they would have been devoid of meaning and importance; they are, therefore, by a judicious liberty, brought within that range of vision where expression, action, and form are cognisable.

One great exception is, however, not to be overlooked. Correggio, who was devoted to picturesque gradation under all circumstances, and sometimes at any sacrifice, adopted a different course. The perspective diminution in the cupolas at Parma (to say nothing of the objects being represented as if above the eye) is extreme; so that even the principal figures are altogether subservient to the expression of space. This was the chief object;

* Reynolds, in his Fifth Discourse, justly observes that Michael Angelo attempted little more in painting than could be attained in sculpture.

but the grandeur of form and character which the nearer figures exhibit has been justly considered to place these works far above subsequent efforts of the kind, which, in the hands of the "machinists," soon degenerated to mere decoration.

If the criticisms which the frescoes in the Duomo at Parma called forth on their completion had any foundation*, it may be inferred that the great distance at which the figures were seen rendered it impossible, in some cases, to discern the nicer gradations of light and shade which are essential to make perspective appearances intelligible. Such considerations must, at all events, operate to restrict foreshortening under similar circumstances. But here, again, it is to be remembered that painting is still distinguished from basso-rilievo. The amount of foreshortening which is introduced in the cartoons of Raphael may be considered the just medium. Its effect in rounding and connecting the groups, and in giving a due impression of depth, is in accordance with the truth of those works in other respects, and (even in the tapestries, while in their unfaded state) may have been quite compatible with distinctness.

The transition from this picturesque treatment, and still more from the unlimited depth of Cor-

* Kugler, Handbook of the History of Painting, London, 1841, vol. i. p. 343. The principal works of Correggio are now being engraved in the most satisfactory manner by the Cavaliere Toschi.

reggio's compositions to the flatness of a style resembling that of the early mosaics, is violent indeed. In cases where a gold ground is introduced behind the figures, painting really approximates to basso-rilievo, and to the conditions of the Greek monochroms, without even the advantage of the figures and the ground being of the same quality. Under such circumstances, neither perspective nor foreshortening can be introduced to any extent. The varieties of "position" are almost confined to one and the same plane, and consequently the relations of "magnitude" are real. The splendour of the gilt field, though subdued by being roughened (for this is absolutely necessary), betrays the comparative dulness of the painted surface, and the final outlines on the ground (even making allowance for the gradation of real light on a large resplendent surface) are in danger of being too uniformly distinct, unless a darkening colour be partially added to the gold.

The union of absolute reality with imitation is rarely, if ever, satisfactory, as it is essential that the most important qualities should exhibit the nearest approach to nature. As an accompaniment to painting, there is, therefore, no defence for the gilt ground, when it appears as such. For the rest, it cannot be admitted, on the one hand, that art need be reduced to medieval penury in order to agree with this hard condition, if adopted; nor, on the other, that even the extreme restrictions in

representation which it actually involves, considered in themselves, necessarily suppose incompleteness. An analogous style springs from those restrictions which, in adhering to its own resources, may still have its characteristic perfection. Wherever there is gradation, wherever a greater quality becomes conspicuous by comparison with a less (even if abstract lines alone be the means of representation), we recognise an important principle of art.

Perhaps the most remarkable examples of this relative completeness or independence of style occur in the outlines and monochroms of Greek vases. In these works, the line being assumed to vary but little in thickness, the means of representation may be said to be reduced to the lowest degree. Yet a certain gradation is still preserved. The quality of smoothness in forms is expressed by the omission of internal markings. Without background, the scene is indicated by a significant stenography. A band or other object suspended on an unseen wall indicates an interior; a flower, a landscape; a star, the night. Other objects (the presence of which may be inferred or imagined from the position of the figures) are entirely omitted; thus the ground on which figures stand and the chairs on which they are supposed to be seated are often unseen; as if that which reduced figures to a mere outline rendered subordinate objects invisible altogether.

Flaxman has shown that the language of abstract

form (requiring no addition of light and shade to assist its meaning) * can sometimes be employed as emphatically with less convention; but the same general principles are to be recognised in his designs.

The consistency which is maintained even on so limited a scale is not less apparent in the works of great artists, in modes of imitation which afforded ample means of expression. From the restricted branch of art last noticed, in which so much beauty was nevertheless condensed, to examples of painting, which have exhausted the resources of imitation, the world has always awarded its approbation to that relative completeness of style which suggests no want.

Thus it appears that the contrivances which are a consequence of distance and extraordinary dimensions, are more or less expedient in all modes of imitation in which the organ of sight is less fully informed. The incompleteness in the appearance, as in the case of the absence of colour in sculpture, being compensated by greater general distinctness, and by a representation unencumbered by accidents.

The apparent contradiction of the omission of detail, in proportion to increase of size, has been

* Representations which exhibit only the linear effects of distance and foreshortening are merely unfinished pictures, and always convey that impression; but the treatment of outline above described, however limited in its means of imitation, constitutes an independent style.

already adverted to, and, bearing as it does on the question under discussion, may be more fully stated on the authority of various examples, as follows:—

The representation (without reference to its frame or boundary) is required to expand as it recedes from the eye; this increase of size with distance being indispensable, in order that the work may be duly seen. But this progressive enlargement is confined to significant forms and objects; things less important are gradually omitted, notwithstanding the general increase of size. On the other hand, the degrees of distance to which the style of highly-finished cabinet pictures may be said to belong are defined by the average range of most distinct vision. Beyond and within that limit, whether the pictured plane is made to diminish as it approaches, or to expand as it recedes from the eye, detail is either less compatible with effective representation, or is less perceptible.*

The following considerations may tend to explain the practice in art to which this statement refers. The scale of mere magnitude still increases with increasing distance, as the picture becomes enlarged; and it would at first appear that, at any and every degree of distance, the eye must con-

* The extreme effects of proximity and distance correspond in some respects, for works of art may be so small that their leading features only can be intelligible: this effect is equivalent to that of distance. Thus, engraved gems often exhibit a grandeur of style fit for colossal figures.

tinue to receive an equivalent impression. This cannot, however, be literally the case; for the scale of other qualities, such as sharpness and softness, and light and darkness, may be already exhausted in a picture requiring to be seen near; consequently, that scale cannot be increased by increased dimensions, while it must be reduced by increased distance. But as it becomes reduced—as sharpness, force, and gradation become impaired, notwithstanding the increase of dimensions, the omission of detail becomes unavoidable; for it is essential to completeness that the quantity of parts should not surpass the existing technical means of expressing their relative importance.

LIGHT.

The influence of the general conditions before mentioned may next be considered with reference to light-and-shade. The varieties of this source of distinctness, though infinite, are, like those of magnitude, merely differences of degree. The circumstances best calculated to display it will be again considered in examining its relation to colour.

The example of Correggio which was adduced in adverting to perspective and foreshortening may also appear to recommend the employment of chiaroscuro without restriction, under any circumstances; but this, his favourite attribute, was confined, in the instances of the cupolas at Parma as

compared with his oil pictures, to a light scale, especially in the upper portions of those cupolas. It is evident that a dark effect would have ill suited both the places and the subjects.

The instances are rare, and not always successful, in which extensive surfaces, whether on canvass or on walls, have been covered with masses of low half light and deep shade. Such masses, as is well known, are especially ill adapted for fresco, on account of its tendency to reflect light only from its surface.* Among larger works of the kind, one of the best specimens is, perhaps, Raphael's fresco of the Deliverance of Peter from Prison. But although successful in this instance (as far as the material permitted) the great artist did not resort to the same style on other occasions; on the contrary, in a subsequent work, the Incendio del Borgo, in which the subject might have justified a free use of chiaroscuro, he did not employ it to any great extent.† The reasons for employing it in the first instance appear to have been accidental.‡

* It may at first appear that all pictures reflect light from their mere surface, but this is not, strictly speaking, the case. One great charm of oil-painting is its power to reflect light from an internal surface, through superposed substances more or less diaphanous.

† Fuseli, Sixth Lecture.

‡ Among the painters whose frescoes, previously executed on the walls of the same apartment, were destroyed to make room for the superior works of Raphael, Vasari mentions Pietro della Francesca. This artist was remarkable for his study of

Other examples, with all their excellence, and even with the advantages of the richer method of oil painting, are more or less unsatisfactory, from causes independent of the materials. The night-scene of the Martyrdom of S. Lorenzo, by Titian, is heavy in its effect.* Of Tintoret's darker works it would be unfair to speak, as the shadows have too often become black, either by time or by some mischievous technical process.† The celebrated Night-watch, as it is called, by Rembrandt, is generally acknowledged to be overloaded with shade‡; and the Santa Petronilla of Guercino is a monument of great but, in that instance, misdirected powers. These are the most remarkable examples of dark pictures on a colossal scale. The

chiaroscuro, and in that department of art had probably considerable influence on his contemporaries and successors. The subjects of his (two) works here referred to are unknown, but supposing one of them to have exhibited a striking effect of light (like his Vision of Constantine), it is quite conceivable that Raphael would aim at similar qualities in substituting for it a work of his own. See Vasari, Vita di Piero della Francesca, and Vita di Raffaello, and Passavant, Rafael von Urbino, Leipzig, 1839, vol. i. pp. 192. 434, 435. Of Raphael's fresco, Wilkie observes, "The St. Peter in Prison, finely as it is arranged, is black and colourless." See Thoughts on the Relative Value of Fresco and Oil Painting, by B. R. Haydon, London, 1842, p. 31.

* Compare Burnet, Practical Hints on Light and Shade in Painting, London, 1838, p. 4.

† This is the case even with some of the fine works in the Scuola di S. Rocco, in Venice.

‡ See Reynolds, Journey to Flanders and Holland; and Kugler, Handbuch der Geschichte der Malerei, vol. ii. p. 178.

Last Judgment by Michael Angelo, now obscured by time and the smoke of candles, must always have had a solemn effect from the depth of the flesh-colour (a treatment which may be traced to the influence of Sebastian del Piombo), but there are no masses of deep shade. As the work is in fresco, mere blackness would have been the result had such been introduced.

The unfitness of masses of extreme shade in paintings of considerable dimensions (without reference to the material) is explained by the fact that the distance at which the work requires to be viewed tends to obliterate the fainter lights and reflections in such masses, thus changing depth to flat obscurity.* In subjects which require gloom, it is still essential that the indistinctness should be felt to be intentional, and not to be the result of such distance. The size of the work should admit of the spectator being so placed as to see all that the artist intended to be seen. The Notte of Correggio can be thus perfectly seen at the distance which its size requires; but in looking at the Night-watch of Rembrandt, under like conditions, the spectator is

* It has been before observed, that although an object may be increased in magnitude to any extent, in proportion to its distance, and in order to accommodate the spectator, yet its force of light and shade cannot be increased beyond a certain point, and that point is supposed to be already attained in pictures requiring to be seen near. Not only is force not to be increased in proportion as distance increases, it is unavoidably diminished by it, in consequence of interposed air.

presently compelled to draw nearer. The conclusion is, that the amount of darkness in the latter is too great for its size, and, on the other hand, that moderate dimensions may render such a treatment, if suitable on other accounts, not only unobjectionable, but desirable. The finer gradations of low tones can be appreciated only on near inspection. Subjects, the intended place of a work, or other circumstances, independently of dimensions *, may interfere with this consideration, but it is not the less true that the scarcity of light which would be inappropriate in a colossal picture is quite compatible with the physical conditions here referred to, in regard to works of smaller size.

The Venetian painters, as compared with those of the schools of Lombardy and the Netherlands, appear, with few exceptions, to have systematically avoided a preponderance of masses of deep shade.† This must be understood as meaning no more than that their treatment of light and shade was calculated for works of large dimensions. From the

* In modern exhibitions where no space is lost, and where, consequently, the eye is influenced by the effect of the mass, an entire wall approaches the conditions of a large picture. Hence the amount of light in the component parts of this decoration is required to be great. A subdued window-light may also have its influence.

† The relative amount of light, shade, and half-light, in the works of the colourists, as given by Reynolds, is well known, and it will be remembered that he made his observations chiefly from large pictures. See notes to Du Fresnoy, note xxxix.

first, the great Venetian colourists were accustomed to execute frescoes in the open air, and sometimes in situations where the distance at which the paintings could be viewed was far greater than their size required.* The elements of distinctness and breadth were thus familiar to them, and, it must be confessed, were sometimes transferred to works which, admitting of near inspection, might have suggested a different treatment.

"Venetian shade," which, notwithstanding the occasional darings of Tintoret in more capricious directions, is characteristic of the school, and which the praise of Agostino Carracci has rendered proverbial†, is the worthy auxiliary of composition on an extensive scale, and is fitted, by combining distinctness with breadth, to correct the uncertainty which arises from distance or want of light; it is calculated to give place and meaning to form, to display the remembered attributes of colour, and, while it renders force of local hues indispensable, to combine solidity with clearness. The view which the Venetian artists took of nature was

* The circumstance of Titian and Giorgione painting on the façade of the Fondaco de' Tedeschi is well known. (The remains of some of the figures there painted by them, now quite obliterated, were etched by Zanetti in the last century: two were engraved by Giacomo Piccino at an earlier period.) Examples of a similar kind by Pordenone and other artists still exist, not only in Venice, but in various towns of Friuli.

† In his well-known sonnet he speaks of "la mossa coll' *ombrar Veneziano*."

consistent with the ordinary destination of their works.

They appear, in most cases, to have assumed that the objects to be represented were seen by the diffused light of the atmosphere, as opposed to the case where the light is derived from a particular source. The practical result of this is that intense shadow is smaller in quantity, and that the picture is chiefly composed of gradations of half and reflected light; brightness thus marking projection*, and obscurity, depth. It has often been said that in Venetian pictures (more constantly than in those of other schools) the foreground objects are, relatively to their hues, the lightest; the retiring ones being lower in tone. The diminution of the force of shade in remoter masses, the introduction of accidental cast-shadows, of dark hues near, and bright objects, buildings, or sky in the background and distance, may conceal without altering the

* The "*central* light of a globe" (Fuseli, Second Lecture) would not be the most favourable, with reference to the spectator, for displaying the object, or for insuring a balance of light and shade. The expression is, however, usual and allowable, and the Venetians themselves were not more accurate: their technical term for "lighting up" with the brush was *colmizare*, from colmo, summit, most prominent point. See Boschini, la Carta del Navegar Pittoresco. Ven., 1660, p. 288.

Light in hollows, or rather slight concavities (called by the French artists *sillons lumineux*), is hardly an exception. In some cases, for example in plaster casts, the appearance is assisted by a difference of tint.

artifice. This system of effect in Venetian pictures corresponds with that of general nature, and, like that, is too familiar to be remarked*; but its apparent simplicity conceals a scale of gradation the fulness of which may be more difficult to compass than the pronounced effects of confined light. Hence the unaffected character of "Venetian shade;" and hence, at the same time, its power in marking the essentials of form, while it leaves the general idea of colour unimpaired.†

If the artists of some transalpine schools may be accused of sometimes employing the effects of a confined light for scenes supposed to take place under the broad atmosphere, the Italian painters (for the practice was not confined to the Venetians) must be acknowledged to have as often adopted the opposite course; viz. that of representing scenes in interiors as if seen under a diffused light. They appear to have thought that objects so illumined

* Thus in some of the vast compositions of Paul Veronese, although every figure keeps its place, the artifice of the gradations of light escapes observation, as it does in nature. The Venetians seem to have considered that the office of light is rather to exhibit the qualities of material objects than to display itself. Effects of light are generally confined in their works to the distance, where, as regards figures, form and colour are no longer important.

† Zanetti (Della Pittura Veneziana. Ven. 1771, p. 99.) justly observes, that in the heads of Titian the broader shades do not approach the force of the shadows under the features. Compare Barry, Works, vol. ii. pp. 45. 49. 51.

are more intelligible in pictures requiring to be seen at a distance (as was the case with altar-pieces), and that such effects are in themselves more large and beautiful.

The effects themselves, though derived from the observation of nature in the open air, were produced by various artifices in Italian painting-rooms. The most common (still in use) was that of employing oiled paper instead of, or before, the glass of the window. A Madonna of Raphael's takes its name (dell' Impannata) from the oiled paper window, probably that of the painter's studio, in the background.* Leonardo da Vinci, who is careful to distinguish between *ombra*, "the diminution of light," and *tenebre*, "the privation of light†," frequently recommends attention to the effects above described, and speaks of the modes (probably then common) of producing them. He remarks that objects seen in a diffused light are more beautiful than when lighted from a confined source, and that when represented in pictures they are more intelli-

* The impannata strictly means cloth, but the term is also applied to oiled paper. Most of these contrivances, although not without interest as connected with the Italian practice of art, are obviously fit only for a bright climate; but the observation of nature and the technical expedients which were then habitual to the artists had also relation to the due effect of works in vast localities. It was the more essential to preserve the general appearances of nature in colour and light-and-shade, because the forms in votive altar-pieces were often individual.

† Trattato della Pittura. Roma, 1817, p. 274.

gible at a distance.* He recommends the mitigated light of evening, or of cloudy weather, in preference to the direct light of the sun, in order that shadows may have due gradation.† He observes, that not only the equal force but the hardness of the boundaries of such shadows, if imitated in pictures, tends to render objects confused when seen at a distance.‡ The latter appearances (hard-edged shadows), he adds, "are especially condemned by painters." His contrivance for securing the larger effects which he recommends, is to stretch a linen

* Trattato della Pittura, p. 357. "Distinctness of local colour and precision of outline, are the peculiar character of objects placed out of the effect of strong (sun) light." Burnet, Practical Hints on Colour in Painting. London, 1843, p. 18.

† Ib. p. 336. When Reynolds, speaking of Vandyck's St. Sebastian, now at Munich, observes, that it is painted in his first manner (when he imitated Rubens and Titian), which "supposes the sun in the room," he can only mean the reflected or diffused rays, not the direct light, of the sun. The picture which he describes sufficiently proves that the latter effect is not imitated. In some of Rubens's works, however, the effect approaches that of the direct sun-light.

‡ Ib. p. 71. He elsewhere observes that objects represented with masses of intense shade, instead of appearing distinct at a distance, appear "tinted." Dark shades under such circumstances (having no longer the quality of depth) assume the effect of neutral colours. Ib. 248.

The unvaried force of shade in many of Guercino's pictures might exemplify the justness of Leonardo's remarks on that point, but the works of Paul Veronese often exhibit a modified and agreeable use of cast shadows. In preserving their comparative sharpness he reduces their force, so as to give the impression of a mitigated sun-light.

awning across an open court. In one instance* he suggests that the walls should be blackened; in another†, that they should be painted flesh colour, and be altogether open to the sky. Elsewhere he mentions the "impannata" (for ordinary lights‡); and again proposes an expedient, similar in its results, for softening the edges and varying the strength of shadows by lamp-light.§

Neither Leonardo nor the Venetians were ever deficient in force; but the latter, in making the fullest use of the principle thus dwelt on by the Florentine, compensated for their comparatively small amount of "*tenebre*," as nature compensates for it, viz. by intense local colours. This resource never led them to neglect the study of chiaroscuro on their own large, and, it may be added, difficult principles, but only served to conceal its artifice. So intent were they on securing relief, as well as breadth of general effect by means of light and

* Trattato della Pittura, p. 91. † Ib. p. 74.

‡ Ib. p. 70. From the documents published by Gaye, it appears that Leonardo adopted a contrivance of this kind while painting his celebrated Battle, on the walls of the Council Chamber, at Florence. "31. Dicbr. 1504. Rede di marcho del Forese e compagni, merciai, per più bullecte e nastri per impannare la finestra dove lavora Lionardo da Vinci. 3. 11. 8." Carteggio d'Artisti, Firenze, 1840, tom. ii. p. 89. In the accounts relating to Michelangelo's Cartoon of Pisa, we also find: "31. Dicbr. 1504. Francesco et Pulinari di Simone di Salamone del garbo, spetiali, per libr. x. di cera biancha e spugne e trementine per incerare finestre et per il cartone di Michelagnolo, et a Lionardo da Vinci, Lire 10. 6." Ib. p. 93.

§ Trattato della Pittura. Roma, 1817, pp. 73. 75.

shade, that they frequently defined the perspective depth of their compositions and the place of each figure by means of chiaroscuro alone. Tintoret was in the habit of placing large paintings thus studied, but before any colour was added, in the situation which they were ultimately to occupy, in order to judge of their effect and *keeping*.* The habits of the Venetian and other colourists in thus occasionally preparing their pictures may be adverted to hereafter in an inquiry into the early methods of oil-painting.†

FORM.

The treatment of form‡, which is applicable to

* See the introductory "Breve Instruzione" in Boschini's Ricche Minere della Pittura Veneziana. Ven. 1674. Tintoret and Bassan, the darkest of the Venetian painters, are still examples, in their main aim, of the principles of the school. Their study of chiaroscuro was, however, more derived from interior and even from nocturnal effects. Both were in the habit of using small models illumined artificially; less (in Bassan's case) for the sake of noting accidents of light than for the purpose of observing its gradation on objects more or less removed from its source. Boschini remarks that, with the Venetian painters, "every room answered the purpose of the open air;" meaning that they could give the effects of open light, either from contrivances like those above mentioned, or from observation and practice, wherever they might be placed while painting. See La Carta del Navegar, &c., pp. 72. 137. &c.; and Ridolfi, Delle Maraviglie dell'Arte. Ven. 1648, vol. ii. p. 55.

† The first volume of this work, "Materials for a History of Oil Painting," Longman, 1847, has already appeared.

‡ The "differences of form" can only be classed in their

pictures intended to be seen at some distance, has been already partly considered in reference to certain works by the great Italian masters. It is further to be observed that the means employed to insure distinctness in this department of painting may, without due caution, tend to confound its style with that of sculpture. It is obvious that forms are most intelligible when they are freest from peculiarities; hence, when in any extreme case it may be necessary to counteract indistinctness, it would appear that a generalised treatment is indispensable. But in sculpture this intelligible appearance can only be produced by means of form; whereas in painting, colour (which in like manner admits of a generalised treatment) can powerfully contribute to such a result. The representation of figures of unusually colossal dimensions need not be supposed.*

The grandest examples of painted figures on a

abstract elements, viz. as mere lines. These may vary in position, direction, and extent. Lines are said to be massed by extension; they may be contrasted in their direction, and are repeated by parallelism.

* It is remarkable that the only ancient example on record of painting thus employed (by command of Nero) was a portrait. The figure, painted on cloth, measured more than 100 feet. The extreme modern instance, a consequence of the folly of the artist rather than of his employers, is the cupola of the cathedral at Florence, begun by Vasari, and finished by Zuccaro. One of the figures, if erect, would be about 50 feet. See Pliny, l. 35. c. 7., and Kugler, Hand-book, p. 385.

colossal scale — the Prophets and Sibyls, by Michael Angelo, in the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel — do not exceed fifteen feet. In such representations, as those celebrated works prove, painting can still maintain its complete independence as compared with the sister art. The figures in question though, strictly speaking, abstract conceptions, have the force of character of real beings. It is also to be observed that in the subjects by Raphael in the Vatican, the treatment of form does not approach the conditions of sculpture; as a proof of this it is to be remarked that the portraits introduced in those compositions do not appear incongruous. Thus, although it may be admitted that the most intelligible forms are those which are freest from accident, and that such forms must be best calculated for works intended to be viewed at some distance, yet it appears that, even in the most limited styles of painting, the degree of generalisation which is necessary, with a view merely to distinctness, need not be confounded with the more abstract treatment of sculpture. If, again, the subject should require an approximation to the latter, the full display of the proper attributes of painting, which may be compatible with the existing external conditions, is indispensable. A generalised style of colour may be said to leave painting at liberty to vary its forms and characters consistently with the intelligible effect at present assumed to be requisite, and is, therefore, the

department of this art in which an approach to abstract treatment can be best adopted consistently with its due independence of sculpture. In general, the region of the "ideal" (the largest view of nature) is more safely approached by means of attributes which are exclusively characteristic of the art; the poetic impressions of each mode of representation are then of a distinct order.

But to whatever extent characteristic details in living forms would be admissible in the higher styles of painting, the causes referred to would unquestionably operate to limit the introduction of inanimate objects and accessories, and would influence their treatment.

It is unnecessary to repeat what has been observed on this subject; a consideration in connection with it is, however, not to be overlooked. Next to the great requisite that each mode of representation should rest chiefly on its own resources, the works of great artists teach the principle that the noblest object of imitation should always be the nearest to nature. In sculpture, and in painting when employed to represent human actors, this noblest object is LIFE, with its attributes of action and thought. Rarely in the works of the best Greek sculptors or in those of the excellent modern painters does an inanimate object exceed in truth the representation of the living surface. The contrivances with a view to insure this subordination are, necessarily, most daring in sculpture, in which certain inferior qualities are in

danger of being confounded with reality. As before remarked, it will generally be found that the employment of conventional methods (as opposed to the more direct truth of representation) increases in proportion as objects are easily imitable, and, consequently, in danger of interfering with the higher aim.

In painting, the instances are rare in which such absolute identity with nature is possible.* The representation of a flat surface, of coloured patterns, and painted objects, are almost the only cases; and far less artifice is sufficient to reduce them to the conditions of imitation. But as regards the necessity of superior truth in the living surface, compared with all other objects, the principle is the same as in sculpture. The contrivances to insure this superiority, without violating nature or betraying the artifice, are among the distinguishing merits of fine pictures. Inanimate objects may often form a considerable part of a composition, and therefore cannot be neglected; the colourists have contrived to give value to such subordinate materials, by dwelling on a portion only of their qualities, such qualities being generally selected with a view to give value to the flesh, as if they were merely forced into notice

* Mere form is, or may be, such an instance; but as, in painting, the imitation of substance and space is more or less incomplete, the literal truth of the mere outline, when attained, is in no danger of confounding the work with nature.

by the existing comparison. In the instances in sculpture where absolute identity with nature is to be guarded against, it has been shown that the substance requires to be in a great measure uncharacterised; in the cases now referred to, the objects are only partially characterised. The principle is, however, the same in both methods: art is permitted, or rather required to be apparent, in proportion as nature is in danger of being too nearly approached.

COLOUR.

The general treatment of colour which is calculated to assist distinctness cannot be better exemplified than by the practice of the Venetian school. It may be first necessary to recur to the elementary facts before noticed.

It was observed, that an object in nature can only be apparent by differing in its visible attributes from what surrounds it; its distinctness supposes the presence of some or more qualities which are wanting elsewhere. Thus, the imitation of the appearances of nature is especially conversant with differences; it is opposed to (absolute) equality, and is founded on Gradation and Contrast.

The first—a difference of degree—comprehends Magnitude and Light. By means of their varieties, perspective, depth, relief, and roundness, in other words, substance and space, are represented.

The second—a difference of kind—comprehends Form and Colour; by means of which physical and

even moral characteristics are expressed. Position, as a strictly proper and incommunicable attribute, belongs to the same category.

The possible interchange of these two sources of variety (as regards their effects) is constantly exemplified in nature and in art. An abrupt difference of degree amounts, practically, to contrast; the full scale of differences of kind involves gradation. Contrast itself is imperfect without the auxiliary element, by means of which equality even of antagonism is prevented, and one impression predominates.

The great office of colour is then to distinguish. Each object in nature has its own hue as well as its own form, and hence the origin of the painters' term "local colour." This characteristic difference becomes more strikingly conspicuous at a moderate distance, when objects are seen as wholes, and in their largest relations and oppositions; for, in a nearer view, the eye is necessarily more confined to their component varieties.

On the contrary, light-and-shade, being common to all substances, and presenting differences of degree only, is less powerful at a distance as a means of distinguishing objects from each other; but in a nearer view, when its infinite gradations are appreciable, it is sufficient, without the addition of colour, to express the relative position even of contiguous objects, as well as of their component parts.

Accordingly, while chiaroscuro in all its richness and delicacy is indispensable in pictures that are to be viewed near, colour is no less desirable in colossal works, or in such as can only be seen at a distance.

When employed under such circumstances by the Venetians, its larger appearance, above described, was selected in preference. The "local hue," displayed and influenced as it must be by what surrounds it, was especially dwelt on by them as a means of insuring distinctness. The union of due variety (a union which, in all cases, taste alone can define,) with this integrity of local tint has been considered to be one of the great excellencies of Titian, who, nevertheless, changed his style — accordingly as his works were to be seen in vast halls and churches, or in ordinary apartments — from the most daring force of local colour to the fuller harmony of broken tints observable in near objects. The abstract treatment is more exclusively the style of Giorgione*; by him it was first carried to its utmost limits, and was sometimes, perhaps, too indiscriminately employed, without reference to dimensions and distance.

* From the scarcity of the works of this great artist, Mengs hesitates to believe that he was the inventor of the deep and glowing style of colour which his Italian eulogists attribute to him; the latter are, however, safer guides. The early pictures of Titian, and the works of Sebastian del Piombo, especially his portraits, attest the influence of Giorgione.

The general style in question has been well defined (making some allowance for the stress on its leading attribute—integrity of colour) by Mengs*, whose observations on this subject are adopted by Fuseli. These writers observe, that "the breadth of local tint" referred to was attained by taking the predominant quality in a colour for the only quality; by painting a complexion, for instance, "which abounded in low tones, entirely in such tones, and by generalising, in the opposite sense, another near it, of a lighter character; by painting a carnation, abounding in ruddier tints, entirely in such tints, and by depriving of all such tints its neighbour that had few." The aim being distinctness, qualities that were common to several objects were exaggerated in the one that had most, and comparatively suppressed in the others. The same principle, derived from the observation of nature in her largest aspects, was extended to every visible "difference of kind." The soft elasticity of flesh (ever a great object of the colourists) was more than usually dwelt on in the neighbourhood of substances which, either from their general nature, or from the character which they were made to assume, were calculated to give it value; for, not only inflexible and sharp substances, but sometimes drapery, was made to serve this end, independently of colour, by abrupt folds, and crisply-painted

* Opere, Roma, 1787, p. 36. Fuseli's Pilkington.

lights. The shine on the surface of skin was omitted generally, but most so when polished surfaces were near it; while these were allowed to reflect light like mirrors. Gradation supported the comprehensive system; colours were varied not merely in their hues, but in their mass, degrees of brilliancy, and other qualities: vivid colours were therefore sparingly introduced. Lastly, the same breadth which obliterated differences in detail, obliterated them also, to a certain extent, and according to the scheme of effect, in opposing masses; thus was insured, yet without the appearance of artifice, that plenitude of impression which the eye requires.*

It must be apparent that not all the contrivances above adverted to would be applicable in works intended for a near view. The emphasis on local colours, for example, is in them no longer necessary to insure distinctness, and, moreover, might supersede peculiar beauties; yet the example of the colourists may show how much of this greatness of style may be sometimes adopted with effect, even in narrow dimensions.

The system of the Venetians comprehended other methods, which may be considered, in a great measure, peculiar to the school, and which were equally calculated to counteract indistinctness.

* Mengs, ib. Compare Zanetti, ib., pp. 87—101. Boschini, La Carta del Navegar, &c. Vento 5°. Reynolds, passim. Barry, Works, passim.

Among the means adopted by them for securing such a result, their treatment of certain colours, as affected by light and shade, merits attention. The artifice was, as usual, derived from the observation of nature in the open air. At that distance where the entire object acquires its full force of local hue by the opposition of what surrounds it, the intenser appearance or focus of its colour will vary in place, according to the real depth or lightness of its tone. That focus will sometimes be in the illumined parts, sometimes in the "diminished light," which we call shadow, accordingly as the particular hue requires more or less light to display it. All forcible colours are most apparent in their brightest parts, even when the light is powerful. All delicate colours are impaired, and sometimes nearly effaced, in strong light, and are then most apparent in their shadowed portions, where they become deepened by means of reflection.* But, let the same objects be transferred from the open air to a confined or less vivid light, and the effect, as regards light colours, is reversed; the shadows become dark and, generally, neutral, and the colour is displayed in the light only. The larger system, though adopted by the Venetian painters from habit and predilection almost indiscriminately, was especially employed by them in works intended to be seen at some distance. Fulness and breadth were in such

* Compare Leonardo da Vinci, Trattato, pp. 103. 121. 123. 324, &c. Edition of Rome, 1817.

cases indispensable; and by a judicious use of the effects in question, they increased colour without sensibly diminishing light. The extreme and exaggerated instances of this treatment were generally in situations which admitted only of a distant view. The abuse of the style was indeed sufficiently guarded against by the principle, seldom forgotten in pictures of the school, that colours require in all cases to be more or less subdued and broken, for the sake of general harmony. This object was even partly attained by the practice referred to: the ordinary (and most commonly applicable) principle is, that colours should be neutralised in shade; but, in the excepted cases above described, where they are most displayed in reflection, they require to be, and are in nature, in a great measure suppressed and neutralised in their illumined parts. This is assisted by the colour of the light, which, although assumed to be nearly white, appears comparatively warm on cold light colours, and the contrary on warm ones. Harmony, therefore, was also promoted by this method.

The influence of certain conditions on the leading departments of painting has now been considered. In this examination, the effects of distance on objects in nature, and also on their painted representations, have been adverted to. The two are not to be confounded; but the question respecting their relation presents no difficulty in a practical

view. It is quite certain that the most distinct and easily recognised appearances are best adapted for pictures requiring to be viewed at some distance. The machinery of art is selected accordingly. The point, or degree of remoteness in nature, where colour is most distinct (that is, most large and powerful), is not the point where form is so; for figures must, even at such a moderate distance, be considerably reduced by perspective. It is not the point where outline is so; for, in ordinary cases, outlines are soon blunted by distance. The artificial combination of the breadth of general appearances with due distinctness of form is not dictated merely by the necessities of particular conditions, nor is it confined to particular schools; it is a liberty which all have taken, and is one great source of what is called ideal beauty; for the "enchantment" which "distance lends" is thus combined with precision.

Such are among the expedients adopted by the great painters, in order to counteract indistinctness. The considerations which weighed with them may not only be applicable in similar cases, but may show the necessity of employing the resources of art generally for the same great object, viz., that of satisfying the eye in order to affect the mind. The selection and adaptation of particular resources, with reference to particular conditions; the view of nature, and the use of art which may be calculated for different circumstances; have all one and

the same immediate end. But the test of a due application and economy of the means fitted for such various cases will be, that their conventions should be unmarked, and that art and its contrivances should be forgotten in their ultimate impression.

It remains to observe that if the qualities in various departments of art above considered are fit for works executed under the conditions of dimensions, situation and light, before enumerated, then fresco-painting (supposing due practice in the method) is calculated to display those qualities. For example, its unfitness to represent large masses of shade is not objectionable, because such a treatment is not desirable according to the above conditions. In colour, the stress on local hues and the integrity of masses (not incompatible with harmony and due gradation) which have been employed by great painters in works chiefly intended to be seen at a distance, are quite consistent with the resources of fresco; while in form, distinctness and simplicity are especially adapted for its means.

It has been already observed that the Venetian painters were in a great measure indebted to the practice of fresco-painting for that comprehensive style of colouring which treats objects and their surrounding accompaniments in their largest relations. The early rivalry in fresco of Titian and Giorgione, on the exterior of an edifice near the Rialto, in Venice, has been already noticed. Their

works, chiefly consisting of single figures, were there numerous. Besides that building, the following houses in Venice were painted on the outside by Giorgione. A façade near Santa Maria Zobenico, another near S. Vitale, two others in the same neighbourhood, the Casa Soranza near S. Paolo, his own house near S. Silvestro, and the Casa Grimani near S. Ermacora. The houses painted in fresco on the exterior, by Tintoret, Paul Veronese, Zelotti, Pordenone, Schiavone, Salviati, and others, would form, in each instance, a longer list.*

The modern revivals of fresco on the continent appear to have chiefly had the Florentine style in view; it may remain for the English artists to engraft on this and on the maturer Roman taste the Venetian practice. It was formerly a question whether Venetian colour was compatible with the grandest style of painting; but that prejudice may be considered extinct. Unfortunately, the best of the Venetian frescoes were painted in the open air, and most of them live only in description. † The frescoes of Pordenone, in Piacenza, and two of Raphael's (the Mass of Bolsena and the Heliodorus) in the Vatican, are probably among the best examples of colour in this method now existing. The last mentioned, according to every hypothesis, were

* See Boschini, Ricche Minere, &c.

† Some fine remains of Pordenone's works of this kind still exist. See a Letter from Mr. Hart, R. A. Second Report, p. 44; compare Mr. Wilson's Report, ib., pp. 31. 35.

painted under the influence of an artist of the Venetian school. Their date corresponds with the arrival in Rome of Sebastian del Piombo, whose powerful style of colouring may have been emulated by Raphael; and Morto da Feltre appears to have been employed on them.* Both were of the school of Giorgione.

The resources which have been here dwelt on are to be considered as applicable, in many cases, to one class of conditions only. The different means and aims, which entirely opposite circumstances might require or suggest, have been already occasionally noticed, and may now be recapitulated; with a view to obviate the partial conclusions which a somewhat exclusive view might appear to involve.

The external conditions, relating to light, situation, dimensions and methods, at first proposed for consideration, were called "*causes of indistinctness.*"

Let those conditions now be reversed. Let the dimensions of the picture and of the objects represented † be such that the spectator may best con-

* See Alcune Osservazioni Artistiche del Cav. Agricola. Roma, 1839, p. 7.

† A small picture may contain portions of large or even colossal figures, in which case the distance of the spectator from the work is no longer regulated by the dimensions of the frame, but by those of the objects represented. A distance corresponding with the average limits of most distinct vision is here purposely assumed.

template the work at the distance of two or three feet (or whatever distance may be requisite to insure most distinct vision). Let the picture be opposite the eye. Let the light be altogether adapted. And let the means of representation be oil-painting, the resources of which are all-sufficient for complete imitation.

On the former principle these conditions may be called *causes of distinctness*. They are compatible with, and therefore invite the introduction of all (agreeable) qualities which in nature can be appreciated only by near inspection. Such qualities now become characteristic of the style; for the above external conditions — involving a just adaptation of technical means — not only permit, but require, that every excellence which was inadmissible or unattainable under other circumstances, should now assert its claims. On the same principle, provided the work can be seen with perfect convenience, the means before employed to counteract indistinctness may now be thrown aside — not merely as unnecessary, but because they may interfere with the complete representation of a new order of facts. These appear to be the general principles of the school of the Netherlands, especially in subjects of figures. The leading qualities which are the result may be thus enumerated.

The assumed near point of view permits and invites the introduction of a large proportion of low tones, all the gradations of which are now

appreciable. These are rendered luminous by intense but still transparent shades, and acquire richness from the scarcity of strong light. Accidents of light—not excepting sun-light—are admissible, and often even desirable; they are no longer in danger of interfering with the intelligible representation of form and colour, and may be necessary to give that degree of interest which the subject cannot always command.

The employment of perspective and foreshortening is unrestricted; the last appears to be avoided in no case in which it would be intelligible in nature. Varieties in the place or "position" of objects are especially sought in depth.

An assemblage of broken, harmonious, and nameless hues is next to be remarked, among which the slightest approach to what is called positive colour is conspicuous. This sobriety has nevertheless the effect (with occasional exceptions in the school) of giving a predominant impression of warmth, and of thus vindicating the general character of colour as distinguished from mere chiaroscuro.

The varieties of sharpness and softness in the boundaries of forms and in their internal markings, must ever exist where there is a background and light and shade; the relation between them is therefore the same as on a larger scale, but the extreme diminution of figures in cabinet pictures generally induces utmost precision in the sharper parts. Lastly, where each object may

be discerned without difficulty, yet by means of delicate gradations of light can keep its place and thus be easily intelligible, details may be copious and forms altogether individual. Thus is again furnished the link between appropriate technical means and the choice of incidents, and hence the predilection with the masters of this style for familiar and even trivial circumstances. On this last point it is however to be remarked, that where so much judgment and well directed skill are present in the work, our respect is commanded even by the unpretending nature of the subjects; and where these are not offensive, they can hardly be said to diminish the satisfaction of the spectator who is alive to the higher objects of the artist. A greater danger to which this style is liable (in finished pictures where human actors form the subject), is that of making the accessories and inanimate objects truer to nature than the representation of life. This defect is, however, avoided, even in elaborate works, by the best masters of the school.

To conclude; the resources, whether abundant or limited, of the imitative arts are, in relation to nature, necessarily incomplete; but it appears that, in the best examples, the very means employed to compensate for their incompleteness are, in each case, the source of a characteristic perfection and the foundation of a specific style. As it is with the arts compared with each other, so it is with the various applications of a given art; the methods

employed to correct the incompleteness or indistinctness which may be the result of particular conditions are, in the works of the great masters, the cause of excellencies not attainable, to the same extent, by any other means. In the instance last mentioned—the school of the Netherlands—it is apparent that no indirect contrivances or conventions are necessary to counteract the effects of indistinctness; on the contrary, all that would be indistinct in other modes of representation is here admissible with scarcely any restriction. The incompleteness to be overcome, which is here the cause of peculiar attractions, therefore resides solely in the conditions and imperfections of the art itself, which, on near inspection, are in greater danger of being remembered. These are—a flat surface and material pigments; and these are precisely the circumstances which, by the skill of the artists in the works referred to, are forgotten by the spectator. The consequences of the difficulty overcome are, as usual, among the characteristic perfections of the style.

The two extremes of "external conditions," and their corresponding styles, have been here chiefly considered. The intermediate modes and combinations are innumerable; but in considering the question to what extent and in what respects the extremes of style may be compatible with each other, it will appear, on a review of what has been stated, that the grander view of nature, and of the

technical means fitted to represent it, may be satisfactory in reduced dimensions in the department of form rather than in those of colour and light-and-shade; and that, on the other hand, the combination of the usual characteristics of small pictures with large dimensions, if possible in light-and-shade and colour, is impossible in form. The last-named attribute being the indispensable medium of the artist's conceptions, it follows that the interchange of subjects fitted respectively for the two styles can only be admissible as regards the treatment of grand subjects in small dimensions, and even then at the risk of the conventions of the grander style being too apparent.

No. IX.

LIFE OF RAPHAEL.*

For more than two centuries every account of the life and labours of Raphael may be said to have been derived, with little material alteration, from Vasari. It would be unjust to so pleasing a narrator to attribute this solely to the indolence of the writers who succeeded him; indeed modern critics, without excusing the occasional inaccuracies of the Florentine biographer, have acknowledged that his just and artist-like criticism, and the naïveté and interest of his details, as far as they go, could scarcely be improved. It was, in short, chiefly owing to Vasari's well-earned reputation that the task of revising and, what was far more difficult, of completing the valuable outlines he had left, was so long — unfortunately too long — deferred. Of the more voluminous accounts of the Italian painters which have appeared within the present century, the greater part, however embellished by the description of works of art, or enlivened by the connexion with general history, can scarcely be said to have contributed any additional facts.

* Review of J. D. Passavant's "Rafael von Urbino und sein Vater Giovanni Santi, in zwei Theilen mit vierzehn Abbildungen. Leipzig, F. A. Brockhaus, 1839." Quarterly Review, No. cxxxi. June, 1840.

To this class belong the lives of Raphael by Duppa, Braun, and Quatremère de Quincy:—the Italian translation of the last, overwhelmed as it is with notes not always remarkable for their importance or correctness, may nevertheless be considered the fullest memoir that had appeared prior to the far superior work of Passavant.

The credit of instituting a new kind of research in the history of art, as opposed to the habit of copying Vasari, is perhaps due in the first instance to Pungileoni. The first volume of his Life of Correggio, published in 1817, proved that it was still possible to wrest from the mouldering records of convents and similar archives a few important facts and chronological data, with which, as safe links, other materials might be connected. The same writer was equally fortunate in his patient researches at Urbino respecting Giovanni Santi, the father of Raphael, and respecting the great painter himself; but conscious, perhaps, that his Life of Correggio had failed to unite a comprehensive spirit of criticism with mere historic accuracy, he contented himself with giving the latter results of his investigations in two small pamphlets, as materials for future historians.

Of the writers on art on this side the Alps, the first who followed the example of Pungileoni in original research, while he far surpassed the Italian in philosophic criticism, was Von Rumohr. In the first two volumes of his "Italienische Forschungen,"

after briefly tracing the vicissitudes of art in the dark ages, this writer gives the history of several painters of the Florentine, Sienese, and Umbrian schools. His sources were original documents and the testimonies of early writers employed to verify or correct the accounts of Vasari; his descriptions and criticisms were fresh from the works themselves in every case where this was possible. Thus a scrupulous spirit of investigation, combined with the views of an enlightened historian and not unskilful connoisseur, at once distinguish Rumohr from most of the writers on these subjects who appeared about the same time; of the two opposite qualifications of patient research and a generalising, philosophic treatment of materials thus acquired, it must, however, be admitted that the latter is ever active — with or without sufficient data. The third volume was devoted to Raphael and his contemporaries, but the account is brief, and the method this author had followed with such pains in his former volumes he wanted either leisure or inclination to pursue. We shall have occasion, however, to show, that even in this portion he still appears to advantage in his occasional enlightened remarks on the works of Raphael.

The same spirit of accurate research, the same conscientious principle as to actual inspection, a still more practised eye, and a still more artist-like feeling, are united in Passavant with a more cautious indulgence of particular opinions and impressions.

In philosophic criticism he is, perhaps, inferior to Rumohr; his laborious and well-arranged book might be rendered still more complete and accurate even in its facts, but on the whole it may safely be said, that no production of the kind has approached it for copiousness and originality of information. The second volume will be found eminently useful, and, with very little correction, may serve as a model for future compilations of the kind; it consists of a catalogue of all Raphael's works, first arranged chronologically with reference to the periods of their production. The description of each work, with an indication of the gallery or collection, if known, where it exists, is followed by a list of the drawings or preparatory studies for the composition; these are described in like manner: then follows an enumeration of all the engravings and known copies. A second catalogue contains a list of such works as are known only from description, and of others falsely ascribed to Raphael, or which were only executed by his scholars and imitators from his designs. The justness of the grounds on which the author inserts many a highly-prized possession in this category will naturally be challenged by those interested in the decision. A third catalogue is devoted to the *drawings* alone, arranged according to the countries where the various collections exist. The old engravings after Raphael are also enumerated together; and lastly, all the works attributed to the master are classed,

according to their subjects, as an index to both volumes. The biography itself, which is thus comparatively a small part of the work, occupies about half the first volume, the rest being composed of incidental memoirs, documents, and extracts. By far the most valuable portion is that relating to the earlier history and productions of Raphael, a subject on which conjecture had too long usurped the place of any attempt at chronological accuracy.

A circumstance that at once forces itself on our notice, and which we here find treated with the attention it deserves for the first time, is the importance of Urbino, both in a political and social point of view, at the period when Raphael began his career. The resources and renown of this little dukedom, improved and upheld by Federigo da Montefeltro, remained ultimately unimpaired in the hands of his successor Guidubaldo: the state, in short, was represented, and its warlike population led to the field by hereditary sovereigns, before Florence had learned to yield even to temporary sway. That a Tuscan writer on art should be silent on the past glories of a neighbouring state is quite natural; but it seems unaccountable that so many biographers, in following Vasari should have overlooked the remarkable circumstances by which Raphael was surrounded in his youth, — circumstances which must not only have had an influence on his taste, but which brought him in contact with the most celebrated men of his age, many of whom afterwards served him, at least with the communi-

cation of their learning, when he was employed at the court of Rome.

This inattention is the more surprising since we find that, in speaking of other painters, natives of Urbino, the glories of the Athens of Umbria, as it was called, were not forgotten. Thus Bellori, in his Life of Baröccio, whose descent he traces from a sculptor of that name at the court of Federigo, opens his narrative as follows: —"Federigo Feltrio, Duke of Urbino, who in his days was the light of Italy in the arts of peace and in arms, among his other noble works, built a most magnificent palace on the rugged declivity of Urbino. This structure had the reputation of being the finest that Italy had seen up to that time. Not only did the duke enrich it with tasteful and appropriate ornaments, but enhanced its splendour by a collection of antique marble and bronze statues, and choice pictures, and with vast expense got together a great number of most excellent and rare books," &c. This description is evidently copied from the opening of Castiglione's "Cortegiano," where the expression respecting the collection of statues (un' infinità di statue antiche di marmo e di bronzo) is still stronger. Among the omissions with which Passavant may be charged, we must reckon his not having endeavoured to trace these specimens of antique sculpture, which probably in the end migrated with the ducal library to Rome, and may now be in the Vatican. It

would be desirable to know what they were; for although Raphael was never remarkable for a servile imitation of the antique, we find that he sometimes adopted his subjects, and often improved his drapery and his forms, from such examples.

The influence of classic monuments of art has been too much overlooked, generally, in the early history of painting. In modern times we are accustomed to consider a direct imitation of sculpture as the evidence of such an influence: in the infancy and gradual development of art, the effect was much less pronounced, but not the less real. Those who, like the Germans, are in the habit of drawing a strong line of demarcation between the classic and Christian taste, are too apt to neglect the consideration of this question, and, except in decided instances, as in Mantegna's case, of the adoption of antique forms, appear to think that Italian art was as independent in its infancy as it was in its perfection. We shall not now stay to examine this subject further, but merely remark that, although Rome was ultimately the centre of classic taste, almost every Italian city preceded it in forming collections of antique sculpture. The examples at Pisa, from which the early sculptors of that city caught their first inspiration, the school of Squarcione at Padua, the garden of the Medici at Florence, and the gallery of Urbino, were all exercising their influence before the treasures of the Roman territory were exhumed. Poggio Bracciolini, who had

himself employed agents to import specimens of sculpture from the Levant to Florence, could only count six statues in Rome towards the middle of the fifteenth century.

That the account above quoted relating to Urbino was not exaggerated is abundantly evident from the corroborating testimonies of local historians, and, we may add, from the architecture of the palaces of Urbino and Gubbio, considered with reference to its age. Perhaps the most interesting of the historians just alluded to is the father of Raphael, Giovanni Santi, who, in a MS. poem preserved in the Vatican, consisting of twenty-three books in terza rima, celebrates the martial and peaceful virtues of the Duke Federigo. The chronicle is so far complete that it ends with the death of its hero in 1482, (the year before Raphael was born,) and is dedicated to his son and successor Guidubaldo I. In the dedication Giovanni Santi speaks of having been early induced to embrace "the admirable art of painting, the difficulty of which," he says, "added to domestic cares, would be a burden even for the shoulders of Atlas." From the expression "I am not ashamed to be called a professor of this noble art," coupled with the evidence of no inconsiderable possessions, it may be inferred that Giovanni yielded to a strong inclination for the pursuit, having other sufficient means of subsistence. The military exploits and public life of the Duke Federigo are the subjects of his-

tories almost as copious as the rhymes in question; but some domestic details lose nothing from appearing in a poetical dress, especially as the poet seems to write better when he trusts least to imagination. The death of the accomplished Countess Battista*, at the age of twenty-six, is among the most touching of his descriptions. This lady, whose acquirements merited the praises of Bernardo Tasso, had pronounced an extempore Latin address, at the age of twenty, to Pope Pius II., and the princess and ambassadors who were with him in Milan, when the learned pontiff, with probably as much truth as gallantry, declared that he was unable to reply to her with equal eloquence. On hearing of her dangerous illness, her husband left the command of the Florentine army, and arrived only to see her expire. The poet describes her embracing her lord for the last time, her causing their infant son Guidubaldo to be placed in his father's arms while the bystanders melted in tears, and concludes —

> "Chiuse quel santo, onesto e grave ciglio,
> Rendendo l'alma al ciel divotamente,
> Libera e sciolta dal mondan periglio."

The chronicle of Giovanni Santi is in no respect more important than in his occasional allusions to

* Passavant is wrong in calling her Duchess; the title of Duke was conferred on Count Federigo by Sixtus IV. in 1474, (two years after the death of Battista,) on the marriage of the Pope's nephew, Giovanni della Rovere, with Giovanna, daughter of Federigo.

the painters, sculptors, and architects of his time in Urbino and elsewhere in Italy. These notices, corroborated by the testimony of other historians, by the documents brought to light by Pungileoni, and still more by his own researches on the spot, have enabled Passavant to give a sufficiently full account of the artists who constantly or occasionally exercised their talents at Urbino during Raphael's youth, and of others whose works, done at earlier periods, were accessible to him in and near his native city.

We cannot accompany the historian far in these researches, and must follow his own example in expressing our reluctance to acquiesce in eulogies, where we have not had opportunities of judging for ourselves. Luciano Lauranna, the architect of the palaces of Urbino and Gubbio, undoubtedly deserves to have his name recorded. The style of these buildings resembles, in its tasteful imitation of the antique, that of Leon Battista Alberti, and may thus not have been without its influence on Raphael and his townsman Bramante. Francesco di Giorgio of Siena, to whom the design of the Urbino palace is erroneously ascribed by Vasari, seems to have been employed in the fortifications, and in some works of ornamental sculpture, which still adorn the interior and exterior of the palace. In these decorative works, Ambrogio Baroccio, the ancestor of the painter, assisted, and merited the praises of Giovanni Santi, for the taste and spirit of his archi-

tectural foliage. The walls of many of the apartments were painted with frescoes, which have long disappeared. Baldi, in his "Descrizione del Palazzo ducale d'Urbino," speaks of a room, annexed to the library, which contained portraits of celebrated men of all ages: these have perished; but one of Raphael's early sketch-books, preserved in the academy at Venice, contains drawings of this description, probably done from the representations in question. Even the panelling was here and there of a costly kind; it appears to have been the work of Maestro Giacomo of Florence, who wrought in *tarsia* (inlaid wood), a mode of imitation which Vasari includes among the arts of design, and in which original and fine compositions were sometimes, perhaps we should say, thrown away. The curious specimens still existing in both the palaces alluded to may have been the work of this artist. The English traveller who paces the grand apartments (some of which, in the Gubbio edifice, are now filled with silk-looms!) recognises among these inlaid ornaments the insignia of the Order of the Garter, a distinction conferred on more than one sovereign of Urbino, and of which the Montefeltri were justly proud.

The history of the painters of Urbino and its neighbourhood might be traced to a much earlier date, from the specimens still existing. These, for the most part, possess but little interest; but we cannot omit the name, though nothing but the

name remains, of the Oderigi, mentioned by Dante (Purg. c. 11.). An appropriate inscription marks the house in Gubbio, where the poet for a time resided, and where it is said he composed part of his great work.* It was in this place he became acquainted with Oderigi, the missal-painter, to which circumstance alone probably the artist owed his immortality.

To come at once to the painters whose merit was sufficient to attract the attention, or influence the style of the best of their successors, we find that Gentile da Fabriano painted occasionally at and near Urbino, as well as at Rome and other places. A Madonna and Child from his pencil won the admiration of Michael Angelo himself, who, according to Vasari, used to say that Gentile had a hand like his name. Paolo Uccello, celebrated for his skill in perspective,—and celebrated for the colossal equestrian figure of the English *condottiere*, Hawkwood, which he painted on the walls of the cathedral at Florence,—appears among the painters who left specimens of their talents in Urbino; his works, indeed, are no longer to be found there, but the recorded payments, dated 1468, are sufficient

* The rage in Italy for putting up *lapidi*, to commemorate all kinds of events, has been sometimes ridiculed; but we observe, in passing, that none would object to see such a practice somewhat more prevalent than it is in England. Associations which all must cherish are gradually lost from the neglect of this. Many a house in the older streets of London well deserves such memorials.

proofs. Giovanni Santi, alluding to the wonders of perspective done in his time, observes —

> "Et si perfectamente hogi riluce,
> Che como scorge la vertù visiva
> Perfectamente in disegnio reduce.
> Et benchè el fin di lei l'huom sì non trova,
> Pur è dela pictura membro intero
> E invention del nostro secul nova."

A curious picture by Giorgio Andreoli, erroneously ascribed to Bramante, is preserved in the church of Sta. Chiara. It represents an architectural composition in perspective: the round building with Corinthian pilasters, which forms the chief object, appears to have been a favourite perspective lesson with the artists of the time and neighbourhood, and occurs, variously modified, in the works of Perugino and Raphael. A very similar design was afterwards introduced in the architectural decoration of a theatre at Urbino, when the first regular Italian comedy, the Calandra of Cardinal Bibiena, was represented there in 1513 (and not, as Tiraboschi supposes, in 1508). These decorations, the work of Girolamo Genga, a fellow-scholar of Raphael with Perugino, are minutely described in one of Castiglione's letters.

Pietro della Francesca, one of the most accomplished painters of his time, deserves more especial attention. He was the guest of Giovanni Santi, in Urbino, in 1469. His portraits of the Duke (then Count) Federigo, and his consort Battista Sforza,

forming a dyptich, are now in the gallery at Florence. A single specimen only of his talents remains at Urbino; but in his native city, Borgo S. Sepolchro, many of his works are still extant. At Arezzo, in the church of S. Francesco, Pietro painted "the History of the Cross," and among other subjects, "the Vision of Constantine." "In this," says Vasari, "an angel, foreshortened, descends head downwards, with the sign of Victory to Constantine, who sleeps in his tent guarded by some armed figures, dimly seen, while the light from the angel, which is managed with great skill, illumines the tent, the figures in armour, and the surrounding objects. Pietro," he continues, "thus taught the importance of copying effects from nature, and contriving them originally — indeed, he did this himself so successfully, that he was the means of other more modern masters following in the same track, and attaining the great excellence which we have witnessed in our own times." The defeat of Maxentius was also among these subjects; and Vasari, after praising the picturesque effect of certain portions, goes on to describe the flight and submersion of Maxentius, "where a group of horses, foreshortened, is so admirably managed, that, considering the time when the work was done, it must be admitted to be of extraordinary excellence." He speaks also of some figures skilfully designed in regard to anatomy, "so little known at the time." The remains of these frescoes, badly

retouched, are still to be seen at Arezzo. The sketch for a portion of "the Vision of Constantine" is in the Lawrence collection, and when published by Ottley, was ascribed to Giorgione —a remarkable confirmation of the truth of the above eulogy. According to Vasari, Pietro della Francesca and Bramantino da Milano had painted some frescoes in the Vatican. These, the biographer informs us, were destroyed to make way for Raphael's "Deliverance of Peter," and the "Miracle of Bolsena." What Pietro's subjects were, it may now be impossible to learn; but that which occupied the place where the "Deliverance of Peter" now is, probably exhibited one of those striking effects of chiaroscuro, of which he seems to have given the first examples.* The coincidence between his treatment of such subjects (as described by Vasari above, in the "Vision of Constantine"), and the remarkable effect of light and shade in Raphael's "Deliverance of Peter," is, perhaps, more than accidental, and Passavant might safely have ventured to allude to it. Lastly, this master was skilled above all his contemporaries in perspective and geometry; and Vasari goes so far as to say, "the most important

* Vasari was mistaken with regard to Bramantino da Milano; that artist lived at a later period. It seems that Pietro della Francesca painted *two* frescoes; one, replaced by that of the "Deliverance of Peter;" the other, by that of the "Miracle of Bolsena." (Vita di Pietro della Francesca.) In the Life of Raphael, Vasari speaks but of one finished work by Pietro.

information that exists on such subjects is derived from him." His MSS. were deposited in the ducal library at Urbino, and some of them are now in the possession of the Marini family at Borgo S. Sepolchro.

The most distinguished contemporary painters of Romagna and Umbria are said to have studied under Pietro della Francesca. Among these, Melozzo da Forlì and Luca Signorelli confirm such a tradition by their works more than Pietro Perugino. The name of Melozzo da Forlì, of whom Giovanni Santi speaks in terms of regard, is associated with an epoch in the art, from his having first attempted that kind of foreshortening when figures are supposed to be seen above the eye (*di sotto in sù*); and in this respect he is to be considered the precursor of Correggio. Vasari, speaking of a work of this nature by him, "the Ascension," formerly in the church of the SS. Apostoli at Rome, says, "the figures of Christ and the angels seemed to pierce the roof." This artist appears to have been employed in a villa of the sovereigns of Urbino. Of the celebrated Luca Signorelli it is unnecessary to say more than that Michael Angelo did not disdain to borrow from his original and well-studied groups at Orvieto.

In the prominent characteristics of these painters we may trace a more decided connection with the style of Andrea Mantegna than with any Florentine example; and as some corroboration of this it may

be mentioned, that Giovanni Santi places Mantegna at the head of the painters of his time: —

"Perchè de tucti i membri de tale arte
Lo integro e chiaro corpo lui possede
Più che huom de Italia o dele externe parte."

The poet concludes a long eulogy on the same artist, by repeating that

"In ciò (la pittura) tien lo impero."

The physical elements of the art had, in fact, made great progress in the hands of the artists above mentioned. Perspective and geometry introduced a taste for architecture; and the same love of perspective, in its application to form, led to foreshortening and to depth in composition: with these chiaroscuro necessarily advanced. Instances are quoted, in which some artists, like Luca Signorelli, approached the modern * richness in colour; but for a decided progress in this respect, and still more for expression, and a marked religious feeling, we should rather look to another group of painters in the same neighbourhood, most of them somewhat later in date, with Pietro Perugino at their head.

The period when Pietro della Francesca, and the artists named with him, produced their principal works, was soon after the middle of the fifteenth century. Several were employed at Rome by Pope Nicholas V., about 1455; but Signorelli and Perugino were painting in the Vatican much later.

* "The modern manner" is Vasari's term for the perfection of the art in the hands of Raphael, Titian, and their contemporaries.

The artists in question had been the wonder of their age, yet many of their productions were swept away to make room for the frescoes of Raphael, and afterwards for "the Last Judgment" of Michael Angelo. So, in Venice, the *Pietro Martire* of Titian supplanted the same subject at the same altar by Jacobello del Fiore. Signorelli and Pietro Perugino were, it appears, in Rome when a fresco by the former was destroyed, because a young man of five-and-twenty could far surpass it. The venerable artists might have witnessed this without a painful humiliation: they had the consciousness of having themselves improved on the works of their predecessors, and of having enabled Raphael himself to reach the perfection which it was not in the nature of things they should attain.

For the works of Giovanni Santi, those who are curious to trace the few that remain will find ample details in Pungileoni and Passavant. We merely observe, that the picture, which was always supposed to represent the family of the artist, with the infant Raphael kneeling by his mother's side, is unfortunately proved to be an *ex voto* of another person, whose portrait, with those of his family, Giovanni has introduced.

Federigo da Montefeltro's great love for the arts was in no respect more conspicuous than in his being one of the first of the Italian princes to possess a work by Van Eyck, and to employ one of that celebrated painter's followers, Justus van

Ghent, on a considerable work in Urbino. The picture in question — a scripture subject, treated in a somewhat fantastic manner — still exists in the church of S. Agata, at Urbino. In the background the painter has introduced the Duke Federigo, with two of his suite (one being the painter's portrait), and a Venetian, Caterino Zeno, who was at that time at the court of Urbino, as ambassador from Persia. The picture is painted in oil; the date 1474. Other works by the same artist have disappeared. Passavant traces the influence of this early Flemish style in some Italian works of the same time and place; but Justus appears to have kept his secret of oil-painting to himself; at all events, the older Italian painters continued to work in distemper. This circumstance may have produced a misunderstanding between the Flemish painter and Giovanni Santi, and may account for the omission of the name of Justus in Giovanni's catalogue of the celebrated artists of his time. On the other hand, the poet makes honourable mention of Van Eyck under the name of "il gran Joannes." A passage in which he asserts the powers of imitation, as generally developed in the fifteenth century, also seems to have reference to the style of the early Flemish masters: —

"Chi serra (sarà) quel che possi el chiar colore
Lucido e trasparente de un rubino

Contrafar mai, o el suo vago splèndore ?
Chi è quel che possi el sol in sul mattino
Dipingere mai, o un spechiar del' acque
Cum fronde e fior vicini allor (al lor) confino?
Qual mai si excellente al mondo nacque
Che un bianco giglio facci, o fresca rosa
Cum quel bel pur che a natura piacque ?
El paragon se trova : ove ogni cosa
Vinta riman," &c.

The peculiar characteristics of the school of Umbria, represented chiefly by Pietro Perugino, have been ably defined by Rumohr; but in order to take a just view of this subject, we must first refer to the earlier state of Italian art, and to the causes of its first ramifications. The ancient Christian modes of representation, the technical methods of the middle ages, and the usual range of subjects had been in a great measure set aside by Giotto, whose fame and example decided the tendency of the Florentine school for more than a century. With a feeling for richness of composition and dramatic interest, he had rejected or modified the formal but sometimes awe-inspiring types of the older painters. The subjects derived from the legends of modern saints, and especially S. Francesco d'Assisi, were preferred by this most original artist and his followers, less perhaps from a devotional feeling, than from the opportunities such scenes afforded for variety in composition and for the direct imitation of nature. In Siena, on the other hand, and again in Romagna and elsewhere, the attachment to the ancient types

remained in a great measure unchanged; and if modern saints were as frequently represented, the religious feeling which suggested their introduction into altar-pieces was paramount to any aim of art. At the same time, each progressive improvement in imitation was by slow degrees engrafted on the traditional types.

Among the individual talents that had a share in promoting this tendency in the Umbrian school, Taddeo and Domenico Bartoli of Siena may be especially mentioned. Traces of their influence, both in general treatment and in the religious feeling alluded to, are to be met with in Assisi. But in Florence, in consequence of the mechanical imitation of Giotto, which so long characterised the school, no remarkable example of this religious spirit appeared till Fra Giovanni Angelico da Fiesole, a Dominican monk, afterwards beatified, poured forth a quantity of works, in which the exquisite purity and sanctity of the expressions still excite the liveliest admiration. One of the most remarkable of his paintings represents the coronation of the Virgin. She is surrounded by angels and saints, "so well portrayed," says Vasari, "so varied in mien and in the airs of the heads, that one has incredible delight in gazing on them; nay, the spectator feels that those blessed spirits, assuming them to appear in human shape, could not look otherwise in heaven than as they are here represented." This picture, which appears to have

gained the painter the surname of *Angelico**, is now in the Louvre; it hangs in one of the rooms where the drawings are placed. The upper portion only is in good preservation. Schorn, in his notes to Vasari, says that the late Mr. Ottley had a similar picture: it is probably an early copy; but even as such it would be an interesting acquisition for the National Gallery. Two reputed scholars of this artist, Gentile da Fabriano and Benozzo Gozzoli, painted in Perugia and its neighbourhood. In Florence itself, however, the example can hardly be said to have been followed with effect; Masaccio, who had, to a certain extent, a similar feeling, died young, and was outlived by Fiesole himself; a long interval elapsed before Fra Bartolommeo appeared, and the constantly increasing taste for classic antiquity — a taste carried so far by some men of letters as to induce a *disgust* for sacred subjects — was with difficulty stemmed even by that painter. The works of Angelico, spread early in the fifteenth century throughout central Italy, are, on the other hand, to be included among the inspiring causes of the devotional tendency of the Umbrian painters. One other, and by no means the least, of these influences was the neighbourhood of Assisi, the

* Vasari, speaking of the manners of this holy personage, who refused the archbishopric of Florence, says, with his usual naïveté, "he was never seen out of temper with the monks of his convent; a most remarkable circumstance (grandissima cosa) which to me seems almost incredible."

shrine of St. Francis himself. The church of Assisi is the arena where the early Italian painters contended for fame, and where the vestiges of their works are still to be seen. The history of St. Francis, as affording subjects for the pencil, mainly contributed, as we have seen, to form the outward character of some Italian schools from the first. But the influence of the peculiar religious spirit which emanated from this centre was still more important as regards its connection with art:— it suggested a subdued humility of demeanour, contrasting in a fascinating manner with a certain fervour of expression, a soul-felt, unearthly longing, the origin or type of which is to be sought in the legendary visions of the saint. The following passage in Vasari, relating to Raphael's figure of St. Francis in the picture of "the Madonna di Foligno," is applicable to many representations of the saint by earlier painters: it will hardly bear translating:—"Nè mancò Raffaello fare il medesimo nella figura di S. Francesco, il quale, ginocchioni in terra — guarda in alto la nostra Donna, ardendo di carità nell' affetto della pittura, la quale nel lineamento e nel colorito mostra che e' si strugga di affezione, pigliando conforto e vita dal mansuetissimo guardo della bellezza di Lei e dalla vivezze e bellezza del Figliuolo."

The characteristics above described will be found to present the greatest possible contrast to the principle of ancient or classic art. Instead of action

and form we have inward life. The general distinction is well pointed out by Fuseli, when he observes, "The heroism of the Christian and his majesty were internal, and powerful or exquisite forms allied him no longer exclusively to his God." But the nature of the art itself is unchangeable, and, however modified by the influence of a spiritual religion, must still assert its qualities, if it is to maintain a separate character and aim, as compared with other modes of expression. This was gradually felt, and in the end the desired combination was attained in perfection by Raphael. Angelico da Fiesole may be considered the representative of the *Christian* painters who underrated the physical elements of the art; and the productions of some of his imitators, no longer informed by his sincerity and intenseness of feeling, have little to recommend them. Vasari, after praising, as we have seen, the works of this extraordinary painter, makes the following judicious observation: — "I would not that any one should deceive himself, mistaking awkwardness and want of skill in works of art for a devout character, and on the other hand, confounding the beautiful and true with the indelicate."

The painters who were most remarkable for the qualities we have been describing, united with considerable power of colour, were Nicolo Alunno of Foligno, Pietro Vannucci, called Perugino, Andrea Luigi of Assisi, and Bernardino Pinturicchio. The first-named is the earliest of the four

in whom the impulse alluded to is remarkable; and although but little anterior to the rest, from the dryer style of his works, and from having only painted in distemper, he may be considered the link between the practice of the older painters and the comparatively rich and glowing manner of Perugino. His latest production has the date 1499. Vasari's account of Andrea Luigi, called L' Ingegno, is very contradictory in itself; but it may be safely assumed that this painter assisted Perugino in his works in the Sixtine Chapel, about 1480. Passavant is the first who has pointed out specimens of this artist's productions: one is at Assisi, in its original place; others are at Rome and Orvieto. Bernardino di Betto, called Pinturicchio, of Perugia, was the oldest scholar of Perugino, and was with him when Raphael first studied under the same painter. With regard to Pinturicchio and his master, it is to be observed that many of their later performances scarcely give an idea of the powerful and touching expressions which are so striking in their earlier works. Specimens of this finer manner of Pinturicchio are to be seen at Perugia in the gallery of the academy, at S. Severino, and in Rome. Schorn, in the notes to his translation of Vasari, classes with the best an Assumption, in the church of Monte Oliveto, at Naples. Perugino is seen to advantage in Florence, the celebrated picture formerly in Sta. Chiara being now in the Palazzo Pitti. Having been always

exposed to the sun in its original place, it is now somewhat faded, but Vasari speaks of the beauty of the colouring as new in the art when the work appeared; and in describing the subject—the disciples and others mourning over the dead Saviour —says, "the Marys, *having stopped weeping*, look on the dead with wonder and love." In order to do justice to this invention, it is necessary to remember the violent contortions and grimaces of the earlier painters in similar subjects. Other fine specimens of the artist are at Lyons, Perugia, and Rome. Many of the scholars of Perugino who witnessed the astonishing progress of Raphael, ended in adopting his manner, to the total neglect of that of their common teacher. One consequence of this imitation, as might naturally be expected, was the adoption of many Raphaelesque compositions, and a certain approximation to the manner, and sometimes the higher excellences, of their fellow-scholar. Of these painters it will be sufficient to mention the names of Giovanni called Lo Spagna, Girolamo Genga, and Domenico Alfani.

From the foregoing sketch it will be gathered that this school had less of the severer elements of the art, less anatomical science, and boldness in design, than was apparent in Luca Signorelli, and the masters who resembled and preceded him. A similar distinction is observable in Florence (although, as before observed, the religious tendency was there short-lived,) if we compare the feeble

imitators of Angelico da Fiesole with Verocchio. This artist, whose works were chiefly in sculpture, invites our attention to a class of designers, many of whom resembled him in treating both arts: if sculpture suffered by such a connection, painting undoubtedly gained by it, and to this plastic influence, the thorough study of anatomy, and the employment of chiaroscuro as conducive to roundness, are greatly to be attributed. The latter quality had been already aimed at by Masaccio early in the fifteenth century, and both attained perfection, as regards their application to form, in the hands of Leonardo da Vinci and Michael Angelo.

The fact, alluded to by Giovanni Santi, that Perugino and Leonardo da Vinci were intimate friends ("Due giovin par d' etate e par d' amori"), is almost the only circumstance that corroborates Vasari's assertion respecting the education of Perugino with Verocchio, Leonardo's master; for there is scarcely any evidence of such a connection in the style of the Umbrian master. It would be easier to believe that Perugino's earlier works in Florence may not have been without their effect on Leonardo, whose sweetness of expression is sometimes as remarkable as his accuracy and energy of form. Michael Angelo alone never seems to have felt or acknowledged the merit, such as it was, of this placid and expressive school, at least in the instance of those painters with whom he had personal intercourse. His contemptuous treatment of

Francia in Bologna, and of Perugino in Florence, is well known; the quarrel with Perugino, which, according to Vasari, was a bitter one, could not but excite unfavourable prejudices towards Michael Angelo in the mind of Raphael, who always retained the warmest attachment to his early teacher.

The life of Raphael divides itself into three periods. The first, to the age of twenty-one (1504), was chiefly passed between Urbino and Perugia, where, at an early age, he was placed with Pietro Vannucci. This period includes his occasional occupations in some of the towns of the Apennines, a visit to his native place, a short stay in Florence, and perhaps a glance at Siena. In the second period, Florence was his head-quarters till 1508, in the autumn of which year we find him already occupied in Rome. The third period comprehends his residence in Rome, where, with the exception of a visit to Florence in 1516, he remained till his death, in 1520.

The years of his education, on which his future habits of mind and general taste so much depended, may be said to have been first investigated by Pungileoni and Rumohr, and now more accurately, but still in some respects imperfectly, by Passavant. Raphael had lost both his parents before he was twelve years old; a maternal uncle, whom in one of his letters he styles "carissimo quanto padre," watched over him with affectionate interest, and it is supposed that a year or two only at most elapsed

before he was placed with Perugino. That his education as a painter had begun even under Giovanni Santi, there can be no doubt; but the specimens which are shown in Urbino as his boyish attempts, all prove, on examination, to be without the slightest pretensions to authenticity. Of the painters from whom he may have had some additional instruction before he was placed with Perugino, Timoteo Viti, who seems to have been most attached to him, may have had most influence. This painter had left the school of Francia, in Bologna, and returned to Urbino, his native city, in 1495.* A head of a boy, in the Borghese gallery, in Rome, is supposed on good grounds to be the portrait of Raphael, done by Timoteo at this time. If he taught the great artist, he was in a few years his scholar's scholar, for he followed his young friend to Rome, and there painted under his direction.

Meanwhile, the works by earlier masters, in and near Urbino, which we have before adverted to, were probably not without their influence. Raphael had visited some of the neighbouring towns; and if the impressions of so early an age are to be reckoned as important, he may have seen the works

* Malvasia, in his account of the Bolognese painters, gives the following extract from Francia's Journal, dated 1495 :— "On the 4th of April, my dear Timoteo (Viti) quitted me. God grant him all happiness and prosperity!" It is to be observed that Francia is closely allied, by the character of his works, to the Umbrian school.

of Angelico da Fiesole at Forano, near Osimo, and those of Gentile da Fabriano at Val di Sasso. That the style of Giovanni Santi himself had left permanent traces is unquestionable. A certain peculiarity in the colouring of some of Raphael's works, even at an advanced period, is quite distinct from Perugino's manner, or from any subsequent influence. A flesh-colour, with white lights and red half-tints, is often observable in the works of Giovanni, particularly in the altar-piece of Sta. Croce at Fano. With regard to first impressions, again, it is worthy of mention that Venturini, who, while in Florence, had taught Michael Angelo the rudiments of the Latin language, published a Latin grammar, the first complete work that had appeared of the kind, in Urbino, in 1494. Hence it is within the limits of possibility that Raphael, even as a boy, may have heard of the growing fame of Michael Angelo.

In the choice of a master, the opinions of Giovanni Santi were doubtless remembered and attended to. In the interesting allusions to the painters of the time in the poem before referred to, Perugino is mentioned with the best — but his reputation had greatly risen subsequently. Shortly after Giovanni's death, Pietro's fame was at its height: it had been confirmed by the altar-piece still in the church of La Calza, in Florence, the Dead Christ now in the Pitti palace, and the Ascension done for S. Pietro in Perugia, and now in

the museum at Lyons. With Perugino, therefore, the interesting young painter was placed; and although there has been no possibility hitherto of fixing the precise period, the series of his undoubted works begins before 1500; that is, before he was seventeen. His first productions consist of direct copies from Perugino, and of original portions in Perugino's pictures. The earliest known work is a copy from a subject of his master's, representing the Infant Christ and St. John embracing: it is in Perugia, in the sacristy of the church of S. Pietro. Many of his earliest drawings are in the sketch-book preserved in the academy at Venice.

Before Raphael re-visited Urbino, in 1499, on account of domestic affairs, the fortunes of the Duke Guidubaldo had suffered a reverse; the papal army, which he had commanded, having been defeated, and he himself taken prisoner chiefly through the prowess of Vitellozzo Vitelli, lord of the diminutive territory of Città di Castello. The Duchess Elizabetta Gonzaga had parted with her jewels, and the faithful liegemen of Urbino, with devoted liberality, had contributed their utmost to effect their sovereign's ransom. At the period of Raphael's visit, the duke was suffering from a more permanent evil, *the gout*, which according to Castiglione, had afflicted him from the age of twenty. The hostilities with Vitellozzo Vitelli are adroitly suppressed by Passavant; for in the following year Città di Castello was the theatre of Raphael's first

occupations on his own account. It is, however, to be remembered that these *condottieri* wars were seldom the cause of lasting animosity; and if the very soldiers could fight on any side, accordingly as they were paid, the artists might claim the privilege of exercising their talents with the same sublime indifference to politics; a liberal understanding, not always recognised, we are sorry to say, by the Whig and Tory Mæcenases of more modern times. The above consideration seems to have been too much overlooked by the author when he elsewhere contends that, in Federigo's time, it was impossible Leon Battista Alberti could have been employed as the architect of the ducal palace, *because* he was previously in the service of Sigismondo Malatesta, the foe of Urbino.

In this visit to his native place, Raphael, owing to his extreme youth, and perhaps the state of his sovereign's health and fortunes, does not appear to have been noticed by the court. Some of his first works, done soon after at Città di Castello, are still preserved; but the well-known Crucifixion was, a few years since, in the gallery of Cardinal Fesch, and if it is gone where that collection was destined —to Ajaccio, in Corsica — it can scarcely be numbered among the accessible relics of the master.* Passavant gives a representation of it among some engravings, which form a rather inconvenient folio

* It was sold in Rome, with the greater part of the Cardinal's collection, in 1844.

appendix to his octavo text. The description of the earliest works of Raphael, from 1500 to 1504, is among the most interesting portions of this biography: the original drawings and sketches of some are still preserved; and several of these are in the Lawrence collection. Many of the pictures were altar-pieces of considerable dimensions; as, for instance, the Crucifixion, before mentioned; the Adoration of the Magi, now in the Berlin Museum*; the Coronation of the Virgin, now in the Vatican; and the Coronation of St. Nicholas of Tolentino; which last disappeared from the Vatican during the occupation of Rome by the French, and has not since been heard of. Of the smaller works of this period, the most charming specimens are the Staffa Madonna, still in Perugia; the celebrated Sposalizio, or Marriage of the Virgin, now at Milan, and well known by Longhi's beautiful engraving; the Christ, with the Sleeping Disciples, in Prince Gabrielli's possession, in Rome; and the composition called the Vision of a Warrior. The last named, one of the few pictures of this class in England, was together with the original drawing in the collection of Sir Mark Sykes.†

The extraordinary talents of Raphael had already

* This picture was bought, within the last twenty years, for 6000 Roman crowns.

† The price paid by Sir M. S. to Mr. Ottley was 470*l.* The picture and drawing are now in the National Gallery. The Gabrielli picture is also in England; the property of Mr. Conyngham.

received the homage of his fellow-scholars, and, from the superiority of the portions which he painted in Perugino's pictures, must have been acknowledged and valued by his master. The grace and fertility of his invention at the age of twenty had already induced some of the older painters with whom he associated to apply to him for designs, and for assistance in various ways. This was especially the case with Pinturicchio, who, having been commissioned by Cardinal Francesco Piccolomini to paint a series of frescoes in the Libreria of the Duomo at Siena, requested Raphael to make the designs. Some of these drawings are still in existence; and the Sienese love to encourage the belief founded on a vague statement in Vasari, that Raphael prepared the cartoons and painted on the frescoes as well. For this there are no sufficient grounds; on the contrary, the tasteless alterations from the original designs prove that the frescoes could not even have been executed under Raphael's eye. Rumohr had already adduced strong proofs on this subject, and they are more than confirmed by Passavant. Indeed a very sufficient reason might of itself be found in the number of works done by Raphael elsewhere about the same time. At the period when Pinturicchio's work was begun, the Coronation of the Virgin was in progress; and without staying to consider the sufficient *alibi* thus established, it is not to be supposed that an artist fit to undertake such com-

missions on his own account would work under an inferior, though older painter, in a subordinate capacity. Raphael's assistance in the designs had been asked and liberally given: his assistance in the execution could not even have been desired; for in such a case the whole work would no longer have been Pinturicchio's. At the same time it is probable that Raphael saw Pinturicchio's work when it was completed: the evidence of his having visited Siena is to be found in his sketch-book, preserved in Venice. In it is a drawing from an antique group of the Graces, which stands in the very room where the frescoes in question are painted. This drawing appears to have suggested the little picture of the Graces, done a few years afterwards, and which is now in England.

After the completion of the Sposalizio, painted in 1504 for Città di Castello, Raphael re-visited his native place. Urbino had suffered painful vicissitudes since he had left it. The Duke Guidubaldo had been compelled to abandon his capital, and live an exile in the north of Italy, owing to the treachery of Cesare Borgia, the too celebrated *son* of Alexander VI., and, to use the words of Bembo — "omnis humani divinique juris contemptor et perturbator." But this humiliation was short-lived; no sooner was the news of the pope's death known (August, 1503), than the cry of "Feltro! Feltro!" resounded through Urbino; the citizens flew to arms; the troops and partisans of Borgia were

expelled; and in the same month Guidubaldo returned amid the acclamations of his subjects. The succeeding pontiff, Pius III., the same Piccolomini before mentioned, died after a reign of twenty-six days, and in the elevation of Giuliano della Rovere (Julius II.), the fortunes of Montefeltro were fully established. The heir to the sovereignty of Urbino was at once nephew to the pope and to Guidubaldo, the duke's sister Giovanna having married Giovanni della Rovere in the time of Sixtus IV. Hence the most friendly relations subsisted between Urbino and Rome.

It was soon after these occurrences that Raphael, at the age of twenty-one, repaired to his native city, having been so circumstanced that the chiefs of the territories where his talents had been so well appreciated had all been in the pay of Cesare Borgia. To this disagreeable state of things the biographer shuts his eyes, and so, it appears, did Guidubaldo; for the great artist was now noticed and employed by his own sovereign. The Christ with the Sleeping Disciples, before mentioned, was the largest of three small pictures done for the duke at this time. At this period Raphael became acquainted with some of those distinguished persons who were afterwards so useful to him. Such intercourse had its natural effect in improving and enlarging his taste; and it is probable that the description of the works of art in Florence, and particularly of some recent and highly celebrated

productions of Leonardo da Vinci, increased his desire to see these excellent examples with his own eyes. His eagerness soon became irresistible; and the Duchess of Sora, Giovanna della Rovere, gave him a letter of recommendation* to the Gonfaloniere Soderini; a letter, by the way, which seems to have produced no effect whatever. Raphael first saw Florence in the autumn of 1504.

Vasari makes Raphael leave the frescoes of Pinturicchio in Siena for Florence, on hearing of the fame of Michael Angelo's cartoon of Pisa, as well as of Leonardo's Battle of the Standard. In addition to what has been already stated, it will now appear that the works done in Perugia, Città di Castello, and Urbino, in 1503–4, sufficiently prove the impossibility of Raphael's immediate co-operation with Pinturicchio. But the inaccuracy of Vasari's statement is evident from another circumstance: the Duchess of Sora's letter is dated October 1. 1504. Michael Angelo's cartoon was not completed and shown till 1506.

The works of Leonardo were thus the chief objects of Raphael's curiosity, and soon became, to a certain extent, the objects of his imitation. The friendship between Perugino and Leonardo, already adverted to, undoubtedly had its influence; indeed it is possible that Raphael may have seen and

* This document is restored to its true reading by Passavant. Owing to the blunders of copyists it had been a source of important chronological errors.

known Leonardo in Perugia, in 1502, or the beginning of 1503; the Florentine artist having repaired thither about that time, at the instance of Borgia, to inspect the fortifications. But the favourite objects of study among the younger artists in Florence were Masaccio's works in the Chiesa del Carmine. Vasari, in his life of Masaccio, gives an interesting catalogue of the painters, including Michael Angelo, who were in the habit of copying from these compositions, so remarkable for general truth of imitation, for a broad style of drapery, and the massing of light and shade; qualities in which Masaccio had far surpassed his predecessors, and in which, as Vasari observes, he led the way to what was emphatically called *the modern manner*.

The imitation of Masaccio, and the other painters, Lippi and Masolino, whose works are in the same place, is apparent, as is well known, in some of Raphael's latest works in Rome, namely, the Cartoons; and, as he probably referred to studies executed in Florence, it is somewhat extraordinary that, among his numerous drawings still extant, none of these studies appear to have been preserved. The most direct proofs of this kind, of his imitation of Leonardo da Vinci, on the other hand, are still to be met with: one is in the Lawrence collection, others are in the sketch-book in the Venetian academy. The Madonna and Child, called the Madonna del Gran Duca, now in the Pitti palace,

and the Holy Family, called the Madonna del Duca di Terranuova, now in Naples, were painted during Raphael's first short stay in Florence. The works he had undertaken in Perugia, however, soon required his presence, and early in 1505 he was again there. An altar-piece, representing a Holy Family and several Saints, was now completed for the nuns of St. Anthony: it had probably been begun some time before, since some portions of it resemble his earlier works—while others, the female saints for instance, show the influence of his Florentine studies. The picture was surmounted by a semicircle, with additional figures; while the *predella* was composed of five small pictures. It may here be necessary to observe, that an altar-piece was not completed when one large composition was done; a smaller painting, sometimes rectangular, sometimes, as in the instance just mentioned, semi-circular, and generally representing the persons of the Trinity, finished the work above. Frequently a frame painted with arabesques and single figures was preferred to a gilt ornament of the kind; and in almost every instance, the step (gradino, predella) on the top of the altar was adorned in front with small compositions corresponding in their extent with the width of the great picture. The predella pictures, as may be supposed, were in general slightly painted.

With regard to the picture above mentioned, the two principal portions are in Naples; the five

predella subjects, consisting of three compositions and two single figures, are all in England. The two figures, St. Francis and St. Anthony of Padua, are in the gallery at Dulwich; the other three are respectively in the possession of Mr. Samuel Rogers, Mr. Miles of Leigh Court, and Mr. White of Baron Hill. This may serve as a specimen of the kind of research with which Passavant's history of Raphael's works is undertaken. Another picture, which deserves to be particularly mentioned, is the altar-piece painted for the Ansidei family, to adorn their chapel in the church of the Serviti at Perugia. This work, so interesting from the period when it was done (1505), is now at Blenheim Castle. Of the three predella pictures one only remains; this, representing the preaching of John the Baptist, and in which the imitation of Masaccio is very evident, is in the possession of the Marquis of Lansdowne. In the same year Raphael painted his first fresco, that, namely, in the church of the Camaldolesi at Perugia. In composition it resembles the upper part of the Dispute of the Sacrament, as it is called, afterwards painted in Rome: with regard to this resemblance, it is scarcely necessary to observe, that the arrangement was in the first instance adopted by Raphael from earlier masters; it appears, for example, in Angelico da Fiesole. The increased breadth of manner which is observable in this work may partly have been owing to the larger execution so indispensable in fresco, but Passavant

attributes the improvement also in a great measure to the study of Masaccio.

A commission for an altar-piece for the nuns of Monte Luce, near Perugia, exhibits Raphael in a new light. The ladies were desirous that "the best painter" should be employed, and a council of laymen and churchmen decided, according to a document bearing date December, 1505, that "the Master Raphael, of Urbino," then twenty-two years of age, was the fittest to undertake the work. However honourable this commission was, the impatience of Raphael to revisit Florence was so extreme that, after having made a finished drawing, which shows his first idea of the subject (the Coronation of the Virgin), without proceeding further, he again set out for the Tuscan capital. The drawing in question is in the Lawrence collection. Eleven years afterwards, when Raphael was in Rome, the contract was renewed, and he bound himself to deliver the picture finished in a year. He again, however, was prevented by his overwhelming occupations: and the picture, but just begun before his death, was finished by his scholars, Giulio Romano and Francesco Penni. It is now in the Vatican. Raphael received thirty gold ducats in advance in 1505; but, to make amends, he afterwards, in the zenith of his fame, proposed to paint the picture for less than the poor nuns were ready to give. In this second stay in Florence the change in Raphael's style is very evident: the

works done soon after his arrival, and which mark the transition, are not among the least interesting. Of two Holy Families presented to the accomplished Taddeo Taddei, in gratitude for the hospitality and kindness the artist had experienced from him, one, in a circular form, is in the gallery of Lord Francis Egerton*; original studies for the same picture are in the Lawrence collection. Vasari observes that the larger manner which Raphael acquired in Florence is beginning to be apparent in the pictures done for Taddei, while the influence of his education with Perugino is yet traceable: this remark is quite applicable to the work just mentioned. Some of his earliest portraits, such as those of Angelo and Maddalena Doni, in the Pitti palace, were executed at this time.

Hitherto we have omitted to state the proofs of Raphael's movements and stay in different places, because they admit of no question whatever. We have now, however, to examine a statement of Passavant's, in which, though we are disposed to agree with him, the evidence is not so incontestable as in the other cases. The question relates to Raphael's visit to Bologna; the following are the chief grounds:—When in Rome he corresponded with Francia, as if personally known to him: he might have been favourably prepossessed towards the Bolognese artist from the first, by the accounts of that painter's scholar, Timoteo Viti, but, as he

* Now the Earl of Ellesmere: the picture cost 1200*l.*

speaks of the sacred character of Francia's Madonnas, it is probable that he had had opportunities of seeing several such works at Bologna at the same time when he became acquainted with the artist himself. In the next place it is certain that Raphael painted an Adoration of the Shepherds for Giovanni Bentivoglio, who held the supreme sway in Bologna till the autumn of 1506, when he was expelled by Julius II. An interesting proof of the friendship between Raphael and Francia exists again in a picture now, according to Passavant, in the possession of Mr. Allen Gilmore: the design, the biographer observes, unquestionably resembles the taste of Raphael, while the execution is as certainly that of Francia. Traces of similar co-operation in a work of Lorenza Costa, a scholar of Francia, may also be adduced to confirm the supposition that Raphael was in Bologna at the period in question, namely, the earlier part of 1506. In the summer of the same year he was again at Urbino, and had now an opportunity of seeing that court in all its splendour. As he painted several small works, including portraits, for his sovereign on this occasion, it is probable that he remained till the autumn, when Julius II., with twenty-two cardinals and a very numerous suite, passed three days at Urbino on his way to Bologna: and the acquaintance between the discerning pontiff and the future painter of the Vatican may have begun on this occasion. The portraits of the Duke and

Duchess, and a drawing of Pietro Bembo, done at this period, are lost; of two small Holy Families, one is at St. Petersburg—the other is recognised by Passavant in a Madonna and Child, now in the Marquis Aguado's gallery at Paris: but we confess the style of that work seems to us to belong to an earlier period. The picture of the Graces before mentioned is more probably of this time; this specimen was purchased by the late Lord Dudley from Sir Thomas Lawrence. A picture of St. George and the Dragon was sent by Duke Guidubaldo as a present to King Henry VII. of England. It was taken to this country in the autumn of 1506, with other gifts, by Count Castiglione, who acted as proxy for his sovereign to complete the ceremonies of installing the duke a knight of the garter—(the blue ribbon had been sent, when an embassy from England waited on Pope Julius on his accession)—and perhaps a smaller picture of St. George done by Raphael when at Urbino, in 1504, was also a compliment to this country. The last-mentioned picture is in the Louvre; the larger composition is now in the gallery of the Hermitage at St. Petersburg; and thus a work of the great artist, expressly destined for a king of England, has been suffered to leave the country.

The pretensions of Urbino about this time to rank high as a school of taste, learning, and polished manners, have been already adverted to; and Passavant attaches due importance to the influence of

such circumstances on a mind like Raphael's. The Duke Guidubaldo, who, notwithstanding some reverses, displayed on many occasions the military talents of his father, had a more cultivated mind than his predecessor. His lady, Elizabetta Gonzaga, of Mantua, scarcely inferior to Battista Sforza in graver acquirements, was celebrated beyond the high-born dames of her age for the grace and dignity of her manners, and was as eminently remarkable for the purity of her mind as for her extraordinary beauty.* Under her auspices the

* "Cujus eximia virtute, moribus et pæne divina pulchritudine, maritus ab omnibus felicissimus et beatissimus habebatur." *Balthassar Castilionius ad sacratissimum Britanniæ Regem Henricum De Guidubaldo Urbini Duce.* Foro Sempronii, 1513. Two years after her marriage, according to Bembo, her husband, "mærens dolensque uxori aperit putare se magicis impediri, quo minus virum illi ostendere sese potuit, se miserum ac porro infelicissimum nuncupat. Mulier, quæ multo ante id quod erat rata, nihil apud virum questa unquam fuerat, nullum ulli mortalium verbum de ea re fecerat, tum illum solata hilari vultu orat, sustineat feratque fortunæ injuriam. Quod ad se attinet bono animo jubet esse; nihil sese minus eum amare, aut in posterum amaturam affirmat: quem quidem domo pudicitiæ suæ florem ad illum attulerit, eum se usque ad rogum perlaturam. Utque dicit, etiam facit." Perhaps no praises ever bestowed on woman can be compared, both for eloquence and sincerity, with those contained in Bembo's little volume (De Guido Ubaldo, &c., Romæ, 1548), composed, as the writer tells us, when the duchess had lost her beauty through sorrow and misfortune. That her fame was long remembered in England we can hardly doubt — and not improbably Shakspeare may have taken from Bembo's portraiture a hint for his Miranda, *e. g.*: —

"Itaque multas sæpe fæminas vidi, audivi etiam esse plures,

court of Urbino attained that celebrity as the centre of all that was refined and distinguished, which has been perpetuated in the "Cortegiano" of Castiglione. This nobleman, who stood in relation to Raphael much as Sir Kenelm Digby afterwards did to Vandyck, makes Urbino the scene of his discussions on the manners of an accomplished cavalier; and perhaps he is not less celebrated as Raphael's friend than as the author of the work in question. That the interlocutors of the Cortegiano were really present at the court of Urbino, and that such a dialogue was held at the close of 1506, we learn from the author himself; but we cannot suppose with Passavant that the expressions given to these personages are to be considered as strictly belonging to the period, and as such to be taken as historical materials. Castiglione distinctly says that he was in England when the discussion took

quæ certarum omnino virtutum, optimarum quidem illarum atque clarissimarum, sed tamen perpaucarum, splendore illustrarentur: in qua vero omnes collectæ conjunctæque virtutes conspicerentur, hæc una extitit; cujus omnino parem atque similem, aut etiam inferiorem paulo, non modo non vidi ullam, sed ea ubi esset etiam ne audivi quidem."

——— "for several virtues
Have I liked several women; never any
With so full soul but some defect in her
Did quarrel with the noblest grace she owed,
And put it to the foil; but you, O you,
So perfect and so peerless, are created
Of every creature's best."

place; that he composed his book some years afterwards, and that he altered it considerably before it was printed, long after Raphael's death. Hence a comparison between Raphael and Michael Angelo, which is introduced, is by no means to be referred to the supposed date of the dialogues, but, like many other circumstances, is to be understood as suggested by later occurrences. As a proof of this, a picture by Raphael is alluded to which was painted long after he was established in Rome. The real interest and importance of the essay, as connected with the manners of the period, is, on the other hand, quite overlooked by Passavant, who prefers quoting a long Platonic reverie which Castiglione puts into the mouth of Bembo. It would perhaps have been more to the purpose if the biographer had descended to minor matters: it would have thrown more light on certain notions of beauty prevalent at the time, if he had taken notice of the remark that the Italian ladies were in the habit of removing the hairs of their eyebrows and forehead (l. 1.); thus accounting for the almost invisible arch over the eyes of Raphael's Madonnas, as well as for their singularly high foreheads. It would have in some degree explained the grave character of the Italian schools, with the single exception of Florence, if he had alluded to the observation of one of these Chesterfields, on the propriety of constantly maintaining a dignified deportment (l. 1.). Elsewhere it is observed, "that

the manners of the Spaniards suit the Italians better than those of the French; for the sedateness and gravity which are peculiar to the former, appear to be much fitter for us than the vivacity of the latter" (l. 2.). Ladies, it is remarked, seldom show their teeth; and we may add that scarcely any examples are to be met with in the paintings of the age where this evidence of gaiety is observable; a direct prohibition with regard to laughing occurs in Lodovico Dolce's "Dialogo dell' Istituto delle Donne:"—"Fugga sopra tutto il riso in tutti i luoghi, e nelle occasioni più tosto lo accenni che ne dimostri effetto;"—and is most literally attended to in all Venetian pictures, in which, whatever is the subject, and whatever the figures are doing, the most imperturbable calmness of expression is observable. The heavy eyelid, the "santo, onesto e grave ciglio," which Giovanni Santi attributes to Battista Sforza, is again a universal characteristic of the pictures of the time, and is exaggerated by the religious painters, particularly Francia and Perugino, from whom it was adopted by Raphael in his early works. The exception which the manners of Florence at this time formed to the rest of Italy is alluded to historically by various writers, and is attributed partly to political circumstances, partly to that classic or almost pagan mania for which the Tuscan capital was remarkable at the close of the fifteenth century. Rumohr, with his usual acuteness, observes a cer-

tain gay, cheerful character in Raphael's Madonnas, painted after he was in Florence: it may be said to distinguish them not only from his earlier, but from his later productions. The source of these dimpled expressions, (which had a peculiar charm when judiciously applied to sacred subjects, although it thus reduced them to mere domestic scenes,) was unquestionably Leonardo da Vinci; and among the works by that original painter which Raphael saw on first visiting Florence, was the smiling portrait of Mona Lisa, now in the Louvre, and the cartoon of the Holy Family, now in the Royal Academy in London.

On Raphael's return to Florence at the close of 1506, he saw, for the first time, Michael Angelo's celebrated cartoon of Pisa; and a closer study of anatomy and form is soon after apparent in his own works. To the next year and a half (for in September, 1508, we find him already occupied in Rome) belong some of the most interesting pictures of Madonnas, Saints, and Holy Families. We have only space to refer to a very few. The larger of Lord Cowper's Madonnas is to be classed among the works of this period; the smaller appears to have been painted somewhat earlier. The celebrated "Belle Jardinière," now in the Louvre, is supposed to be the picture which Vasari says was left with the blue drapery unfinished, and was completed by Ridolfo Ghirlandajo. Many a copy, with a due want of harmony in the blue drapery,

has been brought to light from time to time as the picture alluded to by Vasari, but the seal of Raphael's genius has been still acknowledged to be most unequivocal in the Paris picture. The original cartoon, in an injured state, is in the possession of Lord Leicester. The St. Catherine, in the National Gallery, has an interest from the light, rapid manner in which it appears to have been painted.* Slight as it is, several careful studies for it exist; a cartoon of the same size is in the Louvre; a sketch for the head is in the Lawrence collection, and a small drawing for the whole figure is in that of the Duke of Devonshire, at Chatsworth.

The most elaborate and studied picture belonging to this period is the Entombment of Christ, now in the Borghese palace at Rome. The commission was given by Atalanta Baglioni, soon after Giovanni Paolo Baglioni had regained possession of Perugia (1507). The cartoon was completed in Florence in the presence of the works of Michael Angelo and Leonardo; the picture, according to Vasari, was done in Perugia. Of the accompaniments of this work, an upper portion is still in the church of S. Francesco in that city; the small pictures of the predella are in the Vatican. The studies for this altar-piece that still exist are an interesting proof of the efforts made by Raphael to tread in

* Lord Northwick had paid 2000*l.* for this picture to Mr. Day.

the steps of the great designers then in Florence. Nine drawings of different arrangements for the subject, or particular portions, are in the Lawrence collection. Another still differently composed is in the possession of Mr. Rogers, and seven or eight more exist in various collections on the Continent. In one of those in the Lawrence series the skeleton is drawn within the outline.

It will have been seen that in several instances, and we might add very many others, the drawings by Raphael for well-known pictures are in the Lawrence collection. A few of these only, it appears, have been purchased by the Prince of Orange: we fervently hope that, before it is too late, the remainder will be preserved for this country. No outlay of money for such purposes, we are persuaded, could be more wisely appropriated, and, without even considering the certain good which in the end would result to the arts, we venture to think it a narrow economy to deny a rational enjoyment to the constantly increasing class of persons who take an interest in such studies. The example of Paris shows that a selection of these works might be shown in a certain number of frames, and changed for others from time to time. Should the biography now before us be translated, as we trust it will, a *catalogue raisonné* of all these works will be at once ready for every hand; the number of those who can relish them will be thus greatly increased; and after all, association is the spell by which not

only art, but nature herself, becomes lastingly attractive.

In April, 1508, the Pope's nephew, Francesco Maria della Rovere, succeeded to the sovereignty of Urbino on the death of Guidubaldo; and Raphael, writing to Urbino soon after, desired his uncle to procure him a recommendation from the young duke to the Gonfaloniere Soderini, who was about to have a room in the Palazzo Vecchio painted. From what followed, however, it may be concluded that both the Duke and the Pope himself preferred securing the talents of so great a painter for Rome, for in the summer, or early in the autumn of the same year, Raphael left Florence in haste; his letter to Francia, dated from Rome in September, speaks of his overwhelming affairs there as if he had been already some time regularly at work. The Giardiniera, the Madonna del Baldachino, and other works left unfinished in Florence, were completed by Ridolfo Ghirlandajo.

The biographers of Raphael have often indulged in conjectures as to the immediate cause of his invitation to Rome. Bramante, the Duke of Urbino, and the Duchess of Sora, may all have been instrumental: but Rumohr very justly observes, that as Julius II. had begun his vast plans in architecture and sculpture, and had already assembled several painters round him, nothing was more natural than that he should, of his own accord, invite Raphael, now acknowledged to be second

to none, to assist in carrying his projects into effect.

Whatever may have been Raphael's enthusiasm for his art, his mind received an impulse, unfelt before, under the influence of the vigorous and enterprising Julius. That pontiff, who even as cardinal had directed considerable architectural works, now aimed at a character of greatness in all he undertook, commensurate, at least, with his own high estimate of his power. The plan of rebuilding St. Peter's was conceived on the scale in which we see it. To leave a mausoleum for himself corresponding with the importance of his political history was another of his schemes, and Michael Angelo was selected as the sculptor. The pope persuaded the same great artist, who ever doubted his own powers as a fresco-painter, to undertake the ceiling of the Capella Sistina, and thus were produced the most majestic forms that painting has yet embodied. Lastly, the frescoes of Raphael in the upper *stanze* of the Vatican might never have existed but for the noble ambition of Julius.

Six of the compositions just named, besides the many accompanying smaller subjects, were done in this pontificate; that is, from Raphael's arrival in Rome in 1508 to 1513; and when to these are added the numerous altar-pieces, Holy Families, and portraits, painted in the same years, the labour both of hand and mind is more than ever astonishing. The difficulty of assigning sufficient time for

the unquestionable works of the master is even increased in the following seven years, from Leo's accession to the death of the painter. The frescoes have been often and well described, and perhaps Passavant may be said to have improved on former writers in his description of the "Philosophy" or School of Athens as it is called: in one respect, however, his remarks have disappointed us. From a wish to exalt Raphael as much as possible, he leans to the opinion that the painter chiefly drew on his own stores for the invention of these works. He indeed admits, from the evidence of a letter of Raphael to Ariosto, that the artist consulted his friends respecting the personages to be introduced in these compositions, but, because Pietro Bembo and one or two others came to Rome some years later, he hastily concludes that, till then, no such assistance was at hand. In this he is mistaken; without giving a catalogue of all the learned and accomplished men * who were in the habit of assembling in the gardens and library of the celebrated

* From a wish perhaps to exalt the splendour of Leo's court, Roscoe has not given a very full or favourable account of the men of letters who were in Rome during the Pontificate of Julius; in this he has been corrected by his Italian translator, Count Bossi, who observes: "La prova più luminosa della mia opinione si ha forse nel Pontificato stesso di Leon X., nel quale, siccome brevissimo, le scienze, le lettere, e le arti non avrebbero potuto crescere a tanto splendore, se non avesse preesistito un fundo d'istruzione, che forse in quella capitale non si estinse giammai." — c. 11.

Collocci, it is sufficient to mention the names of Inghirami, Sadoleto, and the younger Beroaldo; for the suggestions of either might fully account even for the extraordinary display of erudition which the first frescoes painted by Raphael contain. It would have been better in short to assume, as every unprejudiced person must, without any derogation of Raphael's powers, that some of the painter's learned friends had given him the leading points of the great arguments he treated, as well as the selection of personages introduced as representatives of remarkable epochs. If the biographer had assumed this, in addition to his very satisfactory account of the pictures themselves, he would have connected them with the state of learning and the modes of thinking belonging to the time when Raphael painted. And here we may observe, that the history which a picture pretends to represent, whatever it may be, is in reality a far truer mirror of the age when it was done. It is when works of art are viewed in this light that they become so precious to the cultivated spectator, and open sources of interest to him which make ample amends for any defect of connoisseurship in which the artist may consider himself superior. Passavant's description of the figures of Plato and Aristotle in the subject of "Philosophy" is strikingly just, but the painter's characteristic representation is to be considered as the lively result of the enthusiastic study of these philosophers at the

period. In the subject of Jurisprudence, one of the four frescoes in the Camera della Segnatura, the invention and treatment appear to us to have been evidently suggested by the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle; for here, as in that philosopher's system, the science of morals is the basis of law. The principal picture, representing Temperance, Fortitude, and Prudence, is surmounted by the single figure of Justice: the fifth chapter of Aristotle's Treatise is the best commentary on this arrangement; the passages are numerous which confirm the view thus taken, but the single expression, "Justice is not a part, but the whole, of virtue," is sufficient. The inscription, again, which accompanies Raphael's figure, "jus suum cuique tribuens," exactly corresponds with the more particular definition which follows. Aristotle holds the volume of the Ethics (so inscribed) in his hand, in the subject of "Philosophy."

The labours of the painter were to have been confined, in the part of the Vatican where he was employed, to the few walls that remained to be covered; but no sooner was the first fresco completed than the pope ordered all the works by other artists to be demolished, and the walls prepared afresh for Raphael. This decision must have placed so young a painter, who, as Vasari says on another occasion, "era la gentilezza stessa," in a very painful situation. In the next room to that in which he was employed, his master Perugino

was at this very time at work on the ceiling: in the room on the opposite side the now venerable Luca Signorelli had just finished an elaborate work as a companion to one of those before alluded to, painted many years previously by his master, Pietro della Francesca. Other works by experienced artists were on the ceilings and walls of the same rooms. Parts of the ceilings in more than one instance were suffered to remain, although the subjects had little reference to the representations on the walls; hence Passavant is not strictly correct in saying, with Vasari, that Perugino's work was particularly or exclusively respected.

Of the Holy Families, painted even while these great works were in progress, we will merely mention the round picture lately in England, in the possession of Mr. Coesvelt *, and now in that of the Emperor of Russia—(a specimen, by the way, with regard to which, notwithstanding Passavant's just admiration, some difference of opinion existed); the beautiful composition known by the name of the Madonna di Loreto, which, it seems, is lost; and the Madonna with the Infant Christ and St. John in the possession of Lord Garvagh. To these may be added the graceful Madonna and Child in the possession of Lord Francis Egerton †, and

* The price paid for it by Mr. Coesvelt was 4000*l.*

† This picture is said to have been first sold in England for 3000*l.*: but Passavant adds a (?).

another traced by Passavant from the Orleans collection to that of Mr. Rogers. Of altar-pieces, that of Foligno was the principal work of the period; and in the list of portraits, that of Pope Julius, so excellent and so often copied, stands pre-eminent—it is now in the Pitti palace. A portrait of the Marchese Federigo Gonzaga, of Mantua, is, we believe, in England. But the Camera della Segnatura was scarcely completed before other works were undertaken in three different churches. The Isaiah in St. Agostino, after having been once finished, was destroyed, and entirely re-painted, according to Vasari, in consequence of Raphael's impressions on seeing the Capella Sistina. The imitation of Michael Angelo is unquestionable in this figure, and in the two accompanying boy-angels; but, except by Vasari, it has never been considered equal to Raphael's own characteristic works; the date (1512) of this figure is satisfactorily proved by Passavant; it may be considered to fix the time when Raphael first saw the Capella Sistina. A fresco was designed and executed shortly after in Agostino Chigi's chapel in the Chiesa della Pace; the Prophets and Sybils it represents no longer betray a direct imitation of Michael Angelo, but were probably suggested by his subjects. The Sybils, like the figures of the Virtues in the Jurisprudence, (the last in order of time painted in the Camera della Segnatura,) are treated in a grander and broader

style than is observable in earlier works. The Prophets, on the other hand, were evidently executed from his designs by some assistant; they were, in fact, the work of Timoteo Viti. The chapel belonging to the same Agostino Chigi, in the church of Sta. Maria del Popolo, was to have been entirely painted by Raphael; the designs, indeed, were made about the period to which we now refer, but the work was not entirely completed, with various alterations, till long after his death. In the same year a second room was begun in the Vatican: two of the frescoes, the Heliodorus and the Mass of Bolsena, were probably completed before the death of Julius, in February, 1513.

Vasari, in the introduction to the third part of his work, in a comparative view of the merits of the great painters, after observing that Andrea del Sarto followed Raphael in some respects, remarks that the Florentine's colouring was "non tanta gagliarda," less daring and powerful than that of his great prototype. In fact, the Heliodorus and the Mass of Bolsena, in addition to their other excellencies, are the best coloured frescoes the art can boast. The frescoes of Titian at Padua do not approach them in richness and glow; and when Raphael is spoken of as a great colourist, it is these two works chiefly which are understood to be referred to. Several portraits and portions of altar-pieces have, however, the same powerful character, and the fine female portrait in the tribune

at Florence was formerly attributed to Giorgione. Rumohr imagines that the great colourist just named may have seen the fresco of the Mass of Bolsena; but, unfortunately for such an hypothesis, Giorgione died before it was begun — to say nothing of the improbability of his ever having visited Rome. Having noticed one of this writer's oversights, we must in justice quote his fine remark on a portion of this same picture: — "The upper group, consisting of Julius II., some cardinals and prelates of the court — the first full of boldness and defiance, the latter obsequious and subtle — forms an historical contrast, in the strictest sense of the words, to the German brute force and honest stubborn simplicity of the Swiss attendants. The dominion of priests and Swiss infantry were the two great moving principles of European politics during the sixteenth century. I doubt whether in any historian they are so intelligibly, so objectively represented, as in this instance." Passavant, again, makes the important observation that Sebastian del Piombo, the best imitator of Giorgine, first came to Rome in 1511; his rivalry with Raphael soon began, and we now see how immediately the latter appears to have appropriated the characteristic excellence of the Venetian.

In reviewing the exertions of Raphael during the last years of Julius, some circumstances are to be considered affecting not only the style of his art, but his personal character. And first, it does

not appear that he saw the ceiling of the Capella Sistina before 1512. The resemblance of the statue of Apollo, in the "School of Athens," to one of Michael Angelo's figures destined for the Pope's monument, is the only trace of any direct imitation or influence of the great Florentine up to that period: gratuitous assertions to the contrary have often been repeated, and many writers, laying undue stress on particular expressions of Vasari, make the Cartoon of Pisa the inspiring cause of this supposed imitation. The real influence of that work has been already pointed out, but the picture of the Entombment has not the remotest resemblance to what is called the manner of Michael Angelo. This exaggerated exaltation of the Florentine artist, as usual, has induced modern critics to go too far the other way, and to endeavour to show the absolute independence of his rival. As a proof of the reality of Raphael's admiration of Michael Angelo's genius, it will be sufficient to mention that several drawings exist copied by Raphael himself from the ceiling of the Capella Sistina: one of these, the expulsion of Adam and Eve, is in the Lawrence collection; another is at Holkham.

We now come to a more serious point. Vasari and Condivi both assert that, when Michael Angelo, owing to a misunderstanding with Julius, had retired for a time to Florence, having half painted the Capella Sistina, Bramante used all his influence with the Pope to allow Raphael to complete the

undertaking. The testimony of Michael Angelo himself goes further; for, in a letter of his, discovered and published a few years since, he says that all his difference with the Pope "was owing to the envy of Bramante and Raphael." Passavant endeavours to show, from a variety of instances, how irritable and overbearing Michael Angelo's conduct was on all occasions, and makes out his case but too well. He contrasts, again, with the harsh spirit of the great Florentine, the milder and more candid disposition of his younger rival, who, as Condivi tells us, declared that "he esteemed himself fortunate to have been born in the same age with Michael Angelo." There are, however, some coincidences which require explanation, in order fully to justify Raphael from the above charge; it seems, indeed, unaccountable that his biographer should relate the circumstances to which we are about to allude without any comment whatever. In the first place, Raphael had no sooner seen the Capella Sistina (we take Passavant's own dates), than he painted the *Prophet Isaiah;* immediately after, he painted *Prophets* and *Sybils;* he then made the designs for the other chapel of Agostino Chigi in Sta. Maria del Popolo; in this the ceiling was originally intended to contain a series of subjects from the *Creation* to the *Fall of Adam;* but the mosaics executed from Raphael's own designs are

limited to the creation of the heavenly bodies.* Four *statues of Prophets* were destined to connect the subjects of the ceiling with compositions from the New Testament intended for the walls. Again, in resuming his works in the Vatican, the subjects chosen for the ceiling in the room of the Heliodorus were all from the *book of Genesis*. It was probably Raphael's wish to paint Scripture subjects only on the walls, and the first done, the *Heliodorus*, seems to prove this.† It was, perhaps, to these circumstances that his rival himself alluded when in the letter before mentioned he

* These have been lately engraved by Mr. L. Gruner, who has so successfully employed his burin in disseminating the works of Raphael.

† The precise order of these works is unimportant, except in the instance of the Isaiah, with regard to which, assuming Vasari's account of the re-painting to be correct, we may even grant an accidental coincidence with Michael Angelo's subject; but such a coincidence, even here very improbable, cannot be imagined in the other cases. The order, we repeat, is unimportant; but Passavant contradicts himself with respect to the date of the Heliodorus. Having described the subjects of the ceiling, the fresco just named, and the mass of Bolsena, as if done in the order in which they are here mentioned, he says, "After the decoration of the room was completed thus far, Julius died." (Feb. 1531.) — vol. i. p. 198. The expression, "thus far," relating to the works above enumerated, generally. Elsewhere, having ascertained that Timoteo Viti painted the Prophets in the Pace, in 1514, and finding that the last payment for the Heliodorus is dated August in the same year, he seems to infer that that fresco was only then finished. — Vol. ii. p. 168.

said, "Whatever Raphael knew in the art he knew from me." Without staying to refute this, it is at least abundantly evident that Raphael sought to contend with Michael Angelo, not only in the same class of subjects, but even in sculpture; yet, although he may have been eager to prove that others could treat these subjects, if not with equal sublimity, with more attractive qualities than the Florentine artist, we need not therefore conclude that it was also his object to second the intrigues of Bramante. The history of the practice of painters in the fifteenth century, and even much later, shows that nothing was more common than to take the subject of any renowned work, and repeat it with — or even without — considerable alteration. In his earlier years Raphael frequently adopted the compositions of his master; in Florence, the Dei Holy Family is an obvious imitation of Fra Bartolommeo; Leonardo da Vinci's works suggested many a smiling Holy Family; — and the period at length came when Michael Angelo was to exercise a similar influence. Such imitations, even when very direct, seem to have been considered as the sincerest tribute of admiration; with an original genius the impulse lasted only for a time, and was a sort of study of the characteristic excellence of a rival; the practice was a wholesome change of ideas, and the result an enlarged perception of the nature and powers of the art. In fact, in Raphael's

latest works, the original tendency of his mind and taste, however improved and aggrandised, is again prominent; and those who fancy they see in these an inferiority in some respects to his earlier productions may fairly attribute the supposed defects to the necessity of trusting the execution so much to his scholars. After all, the direct imitation of Michael Angelo, as we have seen, is confined to very few instances; the rivalry, properly so called, began when, in selecting similar subjects, Raphael dwelt not on the qualities which Michael Angelo had, but on those which he had not; this is remarkable in many of the designs to which we have alluded, but particularly in the Heliodorus. In this noble work, although the artist was far from shunning the qualities in which Michael Angelo was strong; although form, action, foreshortening are prominent excellencies, yet the genuine characteristics of Raphael are all displayed in still greater perfection. Not only deep devotion in the adoring High Priest, not only expression and colour, not only grace, sweetness, and beauty, but the interest and variety of the picturesque, costume, architecture, the horse — all are combined to win every class of beholders. Thus, as Vasari justly observes, "he did not throw his time away in vainly endeavouring to acquire the manner of Michael Angelo, but sought to make himself accomplished universally."

The other two frescoes in the room of the Heliodorus were painted in the first year of Leo's ponti-

ficate, and, indeed, have reference to his personal history. The Deliverance of Peter alludes to the Cardinal de' Medici's escape from captivity after the battle of Ravenna; the Attila was suggested by the retreat of the French from Italy in the same year. Thus, although it has pleased modern critics to describe all these frescoes as forming part of a preconceived and fixed plan, it is evident that accidents of all kinds, the painter's impressions, the change in the government, and the necessity of attending to the suggestions of employers, all had their influence. We must here object to Passavant's arrangement of his catalogue in the second volume, as regards the two frescoes just mentioned. After dividing Raphael's works done in Rome into two classes, accordingly as the dates fall within the pontificates of Julius or of Leo, he places the Attila and the Deliverance of Peter, painted, as he is well aware, under Leo, with the works belonging to the former period. His only reason for this appears to be a wish to complete his account of one room in the Vatican before he begins another — a useless subdivision, which interferes materially with the accuracy of his chronology. A third room in the Vatican, called the Stanza di Torre Borgia, was painted with more assistance from subordinate hands; the celebrated Incendio del Borgo is, however, among the finest inventions of the master. Of the works in the Hall of Constantine, chiefly finished by Giulio

Romano, Raphael only prepared some drawings for the Vision of Constantine, and a cartoon for the Battle with Maxentius. The other subjects, with the exception of some single figures of Virtues, appear to have been even designed by his scholars. Raphael had intended, stimulated perhaps by the example of Sebastian del Piombo, to paint all the subjects of this room in oil, and the walls were prepared accordingly. Two only of the figures just mentioned were, however, thus completed by Giulio Romano and Francesco Penni, as Vasari, in his life of the former, tells us. The work was then long interrupted by Raphael's death, and the remaining subjects were ultimately painted in fresco. The number and variety of undertakings in which Raphael was engaged during the last six years of his life — the designs for the Loggie of the Vatican, the drawings for Marc Antonio's engravings, the frescoes, the Cartoons, altar-pieces, and portraits, the direction of St. Peter's, architectural designs, and even antiquarian researches connected with architecture — are almost inconceivable, even when due allowance is made for the co-operation of numerous scholars. That some of these works should, even at the time, have been found inferior to those executed entirely by himself, is quite natural. The story of Amor and Psyche painted, after long and unavoidable procrastination, in the villa of Agostino Chigi, was among the works in which this difference was but too apparent;

the Transfiguration, Vasari tells us, was undertaken by Raphael to redeem his reputation; but, if he had intended to complete that work entirely himself, the intention was frustrated by his death.

It is difficult to select a few only from the many celebrated oil-pictures of his later time. The St. Cecilia, the Dresden Madonna*, the Madonna del Pesce, the Christ bearing the Cross†, the Madonna della Sedia, are but a portion of the works of this class done under Leo's pontificate. Among portraits, that most celebrated one of the Pope himself, with the Cardinals Giulio de' Medici and Lodovico de' Rossi, is now in the Pitti palace, having suffered not a little either from the removal to and from Paris, or from some inexpert picture-cleaner. The Louvre is still rich in portraits by Raphael: that of the beautiful Joan of Arragon, which also seems to have suffered, and that of the accomplished Baldassare Castiglione, are among them. The well-known Latin epistle, said to be written by Castiglione's wife, Ippolita Torelli, but really his own composition, alludes, in some very pleasing lines, to this last picture. The lady, left in Mantua two years after their marriage, is supposed to complain to her husband, who was at the court of Leo, of his protracted absence. After contrasting the refined enjoyments of Rome with her lonely situation, she generously says —

* Purchased in 1754 for 11,000 sequins.

† At Madrid — estimated by the French at 7000*l.*

"Nec mihi displiceant quæ sunt tibi grata, sed ipsa est
Te sine lux oculis pene inimica meis;
Non auro, aut gemmâ caput exornare nitenti
Me juvat, aut Arabo spargere odore comas,—
Sola tuos vultus referens, Raphaelis imago
Picta manu curas allevat usque meas.
Huic ego delicias facio, arrideoque, jocorque,
Alloquor, et tanquam reddere verba queat,
Assensu, nutuque mihi sæpe illa videtur
Dicere velle aliquid et tua verba loqui.
Agnoscit, balboque patrem puer ore salutat;
Hoc solor longos, decipioque dies."*

The supposition that Ippolita Torelli herself may have written this epistle may have acquired some

* The beginning of this elegy —

"Hippolyte mittit mandata hæc Castilioni,
Addideram imprudens hei mihi! pene — suo,"

is evidently imitated, perhaps improved in thought, from Propertius, l. iv. el. 3.:

"Hæc Arethusa suo mittit mandata Lycotæ;
Quum toties absis, si potes esse meus."

Scaliger does not hesitate to prefer the modern poet; his words are "Nihil dulcius Elegiâ, nihil elegantius, tersius, lepidius. Profectò eam mihi unam malim quam magnum numerum Propertianarum. Illius verò Cleopatra non ut illa vivens reges tantùm ac dictatores capere possit, sed omnes animos quorum interest vacare musis. Qui si omnia sic scripsit nulli post Virgilium secundus, illius comes haberi mereatur."—*Poetices*, l. 6. The poem of Cleopatra, here alluded to, was composed on the statue in the Vatican, formerly known by that name, but now generally called Ariadne. The lines are still more celebrated than Sadoleto's on the group of the Laocoon. In his critical observations on Castiglione, Scaliger does not remark that the poet in the above passage has taken the liberty of making the second syllable of *arrideo* short.

probability from the praises of her learning which appear in her epitaph. The example, too, was not uncommon. The instance of Battista Sforza has already been adverted to. The Duchess Elizabetta of Urbino, it appears, sung the subjects of the Æneid in Virgil's words — such at least is the inference to be drawn from Castiglione's poem "De Elizabetta Gonzaga canente," beginning —

"Dulces exuviæ, dum fata Deusque sinebant,
Dum canit, et querulum pollice tangit ebur;" &c.

A passage that follows, —

"Flebile nescio quid tacitè in præcordia serpit,
Cogit et invitos illacrimare oculos,"

is supposed to have been imitated by Tasso, c. 12. st. 66.:

"In queste voci languide risuona
Un non so che di flebile e soave,
Che al cor gli serpe ed ogni sdegno ammorza,
E gli occhi a lagrimar gl' invoglia e forza."

One of the few letters of Raphael which have been preserved is addressed to Castiglione. It has often been quoted as a proof of the great painter's recognition of the doctrine of ideal beauty (a question which we leave to its own merits); but as it throws some light on the relation which subsisted between two such remarkable persons, we need not apologise for inserting it here.

"Signor Conte, — I have made designs in various ways on your Lordship's idea; I have satisfied all those who have seen

the sketches, but I do not satisfy my own judgment, because I am afraid of not satisfying yours. I send them to you. Our Sovereign, in doing me honour, has at the same time laid a heavy burden of responsibility on my shoulders. This is the direction of the building of St. Peter's. I have good hope that I shall not sink under it, the more so as the model which I have made pleases his Holiness, and is praised by many intelligent judges. But I aspire in thought to something beyond this; I am desirous of finding out the beautiful forms of the ancient edifices. I do not know whether my soaring will be that of Icarus. Vitruvius gives me considerable light, but not enough. As to the Galatea, I should consider myself a great master if it contained half the qualities which your Lordship mentions in your letter, but in your expressions I at least recognise the friendship you entertain for me. In reply, I observe, that to paint a beautiful individual I should want to see several beauties, with this condition, that your Lordship should be with me to select the best; as there is, however, a lack both of discriminating judges and of beautiful women, I make use of a certain idea which presents itself to my mind. Whether this has any excellence as regards the art, I do not know; I labour strenuously to attain it. I wait your Lordship's commands." *

A report addressed to Leo X. on the state of the ancient edifices (with the description of a method employed by Raphael for measuring their remains), and which, among other observations, contains an interesting critique on gothic architecture, was formerly attributed to Castiglione, but has been proved to be in all essential respects the production of Raphael himself. The letter just quoted affords

* If the style and orthography of this letter have been correctly given in the copies preserved, it follows, as Passavant remarks, that although Raphael wrote in the provincial dialect to his relations, he was quite capable of expressing himself in pure Italian.

additional evidence that the intention of measuring the ancient buildings originated with Raphael. The undertaking appears to have excited great attention at the time: it is particularly mentioned by Paolo Giovio in his very short life of Raphael, and Marc Antonio Michiel, in a letter deploring "the incomparable master's" early death, alludes with peculiar interest to the same subject, adding that Raphael had already completed one region of ancient Rome. In vindicating the indefatigable artist's claim to the authorship of the report relating to this investigation, we observe that his pretensions to this kind of merit are not limited to the example in question. Vasari, in the address which concludes the second edition of his work, tells us that the writings of *Lorenzo Ghiberti*, of *Domenico Ghirlandajo*, and of *Raffaello da Urbino*, had been "of no small use to him." Of three sketches for sonnets by Raphael, which have been preserved, from the accident of their being written on the back of drawings, two are in the Lawrence collection, the other is in the British Museum. Passavant has published them all.

An interesting circumstance remains to be mentioned connected with the history of the Cartoons. The tapestries copied from these works were intended to decorate the lower part of the walls of the Cappella Sistina; and the Chevalier Bunsen (one of the most accomplished persons who ever taught the lesson of minute diligence) was the first who

ascertained the precise order in which they were placed: thus accounting both for the choice of the subjects and the difference of size. The following particulars are first to be borne in mind: — The chapel built by Sixtus IV. in 1453, and afterwards called by his name, was partly painted, during his pontificate, with subjects from the Old and New Testament: these occupied the middle space of the wall under the windows, and extended all round the chapel. Nothing further was done by succeeding pontiffs till the accession of Julius II., the nephew of Sixtus IV. Under his auspices, Michael Angelo painted the ceiling; and a certain plan having been already defined by the subjects on the walls, the great artist judiciously took up, or rather began, the thread of the whole history, gradually leading the mind of the spectator from the earliest events recorded in Scripture, and from the prophecies, to the antitypes represented below. It was subsequently suggested to Leo, who readily listened to any scheme that promised a display of magnificence, to adorn the vacant spaces underneath the frescoes done in the time of Sixtus, with tapestries enriched with gold, to be wrought in Flanders from Cartoons by Raphael. The subjects were selected accordingly; and thus still descended in chronological order from the history of Christ, which had been partly treated above by Perugino and the rest, to that of the apostles. On the left of the altar there were four tapestries from the

history of St. Peter, and one representing the Stoning of St. Stephen; on the right were five subjects from the history of St. Paul; the tapestry forming the altar-piece was the Coronation of the Virgin. The pilasters separating the principal subjects were decorated with arabesques wrought in tapestries of corresponding shapes, and the space underneath was in like manner adorned with smaller subjects, generally two in number, in a uniform colour, heightened with gold. The Stoning of St. Stephen, and the Deliverance of St. Paul from Prison by the Earthquake, were much narrower than the rest, from the circumstance of the pope's throne interfering on the one side, and the gallery for the choristers on the other. Afterwards, when the Last Judgment was painted, the frescoes on that end wall were destroyed to make room for it, and sufficient space no longer remained to hang three of the tapestries underneath it. The Cartoons at Hampton Court, as is well known, are seven in number: the four that are wanting are the Coronation of the Virgin, the Conversion of St. Paul, the Stoning of St. Stephen, and the Deliverance of Paul from Prison. Another series of tapestries, thirteen in number, with subjects from the life of Christ, is still preserved in the Vatican: these were done after Raphael's death, chiefly from the designs of his scholars. Sketches by Raphael for the Murder of the Innocents, and the Adoration of the Shepherds, are all that remain to prove his superin-

tendence of this undertaking. Fragments of the Cartoons also exist.

With the exception of the account of the Cartoons, and a few additional details, Passavant's history of the latter period of Raphael's activity has less novelty, and perhaps less chronological order, than the earlier portion. The elegant scholars of Leo's court are, as usual, enumerated, to show how intellectual was the society in which the great artist moved at that time; but many of these were in Rome, although less conspicuous from not being in immediate relation with the court, in the pontificate of Julius; and we observe that there is no influence to be traced in Raphael's later works which can be compared to the extraordinary evidence of erudition of every kind so apparent in the frescoes of the Camera della Segnatura. The only remarkable connexion between the literary pursuits of the age and the later designs of the artist has not been noticed by the biographer. We allude to the commentary on the fable of Apuleius by the elder Beroaldo. This book, first printed in 1501, and again in 1512, some years after the learned editor's death, was a favourite from its style, and still more from its hidden Platonism. The circumstance of the younger Beroaldo being librarian of the Vatican when the frescoes of the Farnesina were done, may perhaps warrant the supposition that the episode of Amor and Psyche was recommended to Raphael by him.

The classic mania may be said to have been propagated by the Medicean popes from Florence to Rome, and by degrees infected the artists as well as the men of letters: indeed, the taste attained its acme in the works of Giulio Romano. Vasari appears to have been quite correct in stating that Raphael sent designers to various parts of Italy, and even to Greece, to collect materials from the antique. An engraving, with the date 1519, representing the sculptured pedestal of the Theodosian column at Constantinople, has the inscription, "Basamento de la colona di Constantinopolo mandato a Rafelo da Urbino." The celebrated bas-relief of the Amorini at S. Vitale in Ravenna is engraved, according to Bartsch, from a drawing by the great artist himself—a drawing probably retouched by him.* Raphael was even invited to make designs from the descriptions of Greek paintings; and, lastly, in order thoroughly to understand the architecture of the ancients, he employed the venerable and learned Fabius of Ravenna to translate Vitruvius into Italian for him. An interesting letter, which Passavant inserts, from Calcagnini to Ziegler, alludes to Raphael's benevolent care of this old man; and is besides so strong a certificate of

* It is remarkable that some fragments of Amorini, precisely in the same style, and probably brought originally from Ravenna, have been preserved in the library at Venice since Titian's time, and appear to have been as attentively studied by that painter.

the great artist's moral virtues, written as it was soon before his death, that it may be reckoned among the proofs—should proofs be wanting—to contradict the idle story of Vasari, respecting the painter's inordinate attachment to the Fornarina, the alleged cause of his death. Passavant treats the assertion (first published in 1549, by Simone Fornari, and copied from him by Vasari,) as it deserves. Earlier biographers make not the slightest allusion to it; and every other circumstance —above all, the unsubdued, or rather increased energy of the painter's mind up to the very end of his career—abundantly contradicts the absurd calumny.

A description of the compositions finished after the master's death by his principal scholars, Giulio Romano and Francesco Penni, completes the account of Raphael's designs in the Vatican. Perhaps the characteristics of the painters just named, and of other scholars and imitators of the great artist, might have been more fully defined. In alluding previously to the varied occupations of Raphael, the author ably distinguishes his style as an architect from that of Bramante. He confirms the modern opinion that the statue of Jonah was, to a certain extent, executed as well as designed by Raphael; and it appears that the statue of the Wounded Child borne by a Dolphin—a subject from Ælian, probably suggested by Castiglione—was also partly by the hand of the master himself. A cast from

this is in the Dresden Gallery: the marble itself cannot be traced.*

The history of the painted porcelain called *the Raphael ware* was investigated by Giambattista Passeri in the last century.† From his inquiry it appears that the designs really exhibiting the taste of Raphael were painted about twenty years after his death under the auspices of the second Guidubaldo. At that time Battista Franco, Orazio Fontana, Raffaello del Colle, and other distinguished artists furnished and executed designs. The name of the last may have given rise to the supposition that Raphael himself assisted. Vasari, in his life of Battista Franco, expressly says that Marc Antonio's engravings after Raphael were occasionally copied.

* Four statues of Prophets were intended to be placed in the niches of Agostino Chigi's chapel in S. Maria del Popolo. Two—those of Jonah and Elijah—were designed by Raphael, to be executed by Lorenzetto, a Florentine sculptor; and Passavant gives good reasons in support of the opinion of modern connoisseurs that the Jonah was completed by the hand of Raphael. The works of Lorenzetto, not excepting the Elijah (finished by him after Raphael's death), are certainly very inferior to it. The remaining two statues were added long afterwards by Bernini.

The statue of the Child borne by a Dolphin "was brought to Ireland by the late Earl of Bristol, bishop of Derry, and it is now in the collection at Down Hill." See the Penny Magazine, July 17. 1841, where a wood-cut of this interesting piece of sculpture is given.

† "Istoria delle Pitture in majolica fatte in Pesaro e ne' luoghi circonvicini." This work, which had become extremely scarce, was republished in Pesaro in 1838.

The biographer would have given still more interest to his work, in the eyes of some readers, if he had bestowed some attention on what may be called the antiquities of Christian art, by occasionally tracing and explaining the traditional types. The general adherence of Raphael to the customary modes of representing sacred personages, while he contrived to remove all stiffness and appearance of conventional treatment, would be an interesting subject to illustrate; and we suspect that most readers frequently want to be instructed with regard to the history and attributes of certain saints. A Romanist, such as the German biographer appears to be, might have been expected to give full information on these legendary antiquities, as well as on the ancient modes of representation; — but our author seems rather to shun these inquiries.* His explanations of very common

* A passage which we cannot venture to translate shows, however, that he can readily excuse the most absurd superstitions existing in Italy in the present day: — "Der marmorne altar über dem Grab des heiligen Nicolo da Tolentino ist hohl, und hat an entgegengesetzten Enden weite runde Öffnungen; durch diese kriechen die Landleute in denselben, und legen sich öfters zu drei und vier neben und aufeinander der Länge nach hinein, und verrichten Gebete, wodurch sie sich mit Gott ausgesöhnt glauben, und kommen so getröstet am andern Ende wieder heraus. Das ist eine jener mönchischen Anstalten des Mittelalters. Aber wer dürfte behaupten, dass sie nie einer menschlichen Seele zum Heil gereicht? und wer berechtigt seyn sie abzuschaffen, ohne eine bessere Form zu bieten, an welche der reuige Sünder sich halten und durch die er sich

matters are indeed sometimes incorrect. In a picture of the Nativity, the sigla I. H. S. unaccompanied, it appears, by the cross, should undoubtedly be read Iesus Hominum Salvator, and not In Hoc Signo. For the rest, the form, though explained in both modes in the Latin church, is to be traced, as is well known, to the use of the three first letters of the name ΙΗΣους. We here call to mind that Dr. Waagen, in his otherwise interesting and satisfactory account of the illuminated manuscripts in the library at Paris, is at a loss to explain the inscription, ὁ παλαίος ἡμέρων. The seventh chapter of Daniel would have explained both the inscription and the figure it accompanied, for the words happen to be the chief scriptural authority with the earlier painters for representing the Almighty with the attributes of age.

The influence of early works, considered with reference to their subjects, is also far from having been exhausted. If Michael Angelo could have been inspired, as Vasari admits, by the Last Judgment of Signorelli, the subject, at least, of the battle of Constantine may have been suggested to Raphael by the fresco of Pietro della Francesca at Arezzo. Whatever works of art this city contained must have been seen by Raphael in passing and repassing from Florence to Perugia and Urbino.

erbauen kann? Das irdische Daseyn ist ein Form, und der darin lebende Mensch bedarf der Formen, wie in der geringsten, so in den höchsten Angelegenheiten."—vol. i. p. 428.

Again, as drawings by most of the early masters were carefully preserved — many having been in Vasari's possession, as he himself tells us — it is quite possible that Raphael may have seen some designs for a chapel painted at Pisa by Traini, a scholar of Orgagna. In one of these compositions, according to Vasari, the doctors of the Church were in consultation, while the upper part of the picture was occupied by the figures of Christ, the evangelists, and the heavenly host. The resemblance of this general scheme to the "Theology," or "Dispute of the Sacrament," is sufficiently evident. "The figure of St. Thomas Aquinas," continues Vasari, "is placed between Plato, who shows him the Timæus, and Aristotle, who shows him the Ethics." The figures of the two philosophers have the same attributes in the "School of Athens."* In the cloisters of Santo Spirito at Florence, the same historian tells us that Stefano, a scholar of Giotto, had painted the Transfiguration in a semicircle, and underneath it Christ curing a possessed woman (la Indemoniata). We have here perhaps the hint for the combined subject, in some respects similar, which was the last production of the master. Even the points of resemblance with

* The subject thus treated by Traini has been since published in Rosini's Storia della Pittura Italiana, a work now approaching its completion. The composition has not the slightest resemblance to Raphael's "Dispute of the Sacrament," but the circumstances introduced are not the less analogous.

Masaccio, and the other painters of the Chiesa del Carmine, are not particularised by the biographer. The Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise is copied, with very little alteration, in the Loggie of the Vatican. Several compositions, such as the Ananias, the Lame Man at the Gate of the Temple, Peter and Paul before the Proconsul, the Deliverance of Peter from Prison, and others, probably influenced Raphael's selection of subjects from the lives of the apostles.* These are among many coincidences which, as throwing light on the gradual progress of the art, might have been adverted to in the history of the painter who represents its maturity.

Of the ordinary life and habits of Raphael scarcely any record can be said to remain. His own letters, and the interesting character of him drawn by Vasari, with a few incidental notices in the correspondence of contemporaries, are the only written sources now known from which an estimate of his personal character may be formed. No anecdotes of his student years with Perugino

* The subject of the Proconsul, always engraved under the name of Masaccio, is satisfactorily proved by Rumohr to be the work of Filippino Lippi, to whom also belong the Martyrdom of Peter, and the smaller subjects of the Apostle in Prison, and his Deliverance by the Angel. The Lame Man at the Gate, and the Temptation of Adam and Eve, are by Masolino da Panicale. Masaccio's works are the Expulsion of Adam and Eve, the Tribute Money, Peter Baptizing, the Ananias, and the Eutychus Restored to Life.

have been preserved; but we gather that even, at that period, his readiness to assist his fellow-scholars was remarkable. We are almost as much at a loss respecting the details of his active and happy life at Florence. Thus deprived of the information which history might have given, a peculiar interest attaches to his early productions, the works of his own hand. In these, at least, he has left unequivocal traces of the formation of his mind, and a mirror of his character and feelings far more eloquent than even the eulogies of his contemporaries. In the life of the Florentine architect and sculptor Baccio d'Agnolo, Vasari tells us that the studio of that artist was the resort of many of his profession, as well as the amateurs of Florence. Here, especially in the winter evenings, interesting discussions took place—(si facevano bellissimi discorsi e dispute d'importanza). Among the artists who frequented these meetings were Raphael (allora giovane), Andrea Sansovino, Filippino Lippi, Antonio and Giuliano di San Gallo, &c., with many young Florentines and foreigners, and sometimes, but rarely, Michael Angelo. To this intercourse, perhaps, Raphael owed his acquaintance with Taddeo Taddei, Lorenzo Nasi, and others: his gratitude to the first has already been mentioned. In writing to Urbino, in April 1508, he thus recommends to the attention of his relatives this friend and patron, in the event of his visiting their city:—"If Taddei should come, of whom we have often discoursed, I

entreat that you will make him welcome, without sparing any expense, and show him every attention for my sake, for in truth I am as deeply indebted to him as to any man living." An expression in the same letter may confirm the supposition that even in Florence the extent of Raphael's commissions latterly required the assistance of scholars. Speaking of a picture, the subject of which he does not mention, he says, "I have done the cartoon, and after Easter *we* shall be occupied on the picture."

His letter to Francia from Rome is very interesting, but we must content ourselves with a later epistle to his uncle, dated July 1. 1514: —

"Dear Uncle and Second Father*,—I have received a letter from you, to me most gratifying, since I find that you are not angry with me; indeed you would be wrong to be so, for consider how irksome it is to write when there is nothing important to communicate. But now that there is important matter to talk about, I reply. In the first place, with regard to taking a wife †, I answer that, as to the one you first intended to give me, I am most happy, and thank God constantly that I neither married her, nor any other, and in this respect I have been wiser than you, who wished to give her to me. I am sure you must now yourself be convinced that, had I followed your

* "Carissimo, in locho de Patre."

† "Prima circa a tordona" (tor donna). Passavant, who is not always correct in his translations from the Italian, has committed a ludicrous blunder in this instance. He reads *tordona* as one word, and translates it *der Azel* (*the magpie*): the absence of the article might have opened his eyes. In consequence of mistranslating this passage he is led to give a false meaning to other parts of the letter.

advice, I should not have been in the position in which I am. At this moment I find that I have property in Rome to the amount of 3000 gold ducats, and an income of fifty gold crowns. His Holiness allows me 300 gold ducats (annually) for superintending the building of St. Peter's: this provision is secured to me for life. Other such salaries are in prospect, in addition to which I am paid whatever I choose to ask for my works, and I have begun another room* for His Holiness, which will amount to 1200 gold ducats; so that, dear uncle, I do honour to you and all my relations, and to my native place; but I cease not to hold you in my heart, and when I hear you named, it is as if I heard my father named. Do not, therefore, complain because I do not write; I might rather complain of you, who have always the pen in your hand, and yet suffer six months to intervene between one letter and another. To return to the subject of the wife, from which I have digressed: you are aware that Santa Maria in Portico [Cardinal Bibiena] wishes to give me a relation (grand-niece) of his, and, on condition of obtaining your consent and that of my uncle the priest, I promised to do whatever his Eminence wished. I cannot break my word; we are more than ever ready to conclude the affair, and I will soon inform you of all. Do not be offended that this business thus takes its good course; if it should come to nothing, I will then do whatever you wish, and know, if Francesco Buffa has good alliances within his reach, that I can boast some too; for I can find a handsome lass (una mamola bella) in Rome, of excellent name, both she and hers; her friends indeed are ready to give me a dowry of 3000 gold crowns with her. Meanwhile, I live in Rome, where 100 ducats are more worth having (all things considered) than 200 in Urbino; of this be sure. With respect to residing in Rome, I can no longer remain elsewhere for any length of time, on account of the building of St. Peter's

* Passavant supposes that Raphael alludes to the room of the Heliodorus; but this was half done under Julius: another room, *begun* for Leo, can only relate to the Stanza di Torre Borgia; Raphael may only allude here to the preparation of the drawings and cartoons.

— for I am in Bramante's place: but what place in the world is more glorious than Rome? and what undertaking more honourable than St. Peter's, — the first temple in the world — the greatest structure that has ever been seen, and which will cost more than a million of gold? Know that the Pope has determined to spend 60,000 ducats annually for this building; he thinks of nothing else. He has associated with me, in the direction, a very learned friar, more than eighty years old; the Pope sees he cannot live long, and has appointed him as my colleague, as he is a man of great reputation and experience, in order that I may learn from him, if he has any excellent secret in architecture, and that I may become accomplished in this art; he is called Fra Giocondo.* Every day the Pope sends for us, and consults with us for a while about this building. I beg you will go to the Duke and Duchess, and tell them I know they will be pleased to hear that a servant of theirs does himself honour, and commend me to their Highnesses. I commend myself unceasingly to you. Greet all friends, especially Ridolfo, who has so much affection for me."

"El vostro Rafael, Pittore in Roma.

"*Alli primo Luglio*, 1514."

---

* Vasari has given his life: he built the bridge of Notre Dame, at Paris, a work which received the praises of Scammozi, and which is alluded to by Sanazzaro in an epigram, beginning, "Jocundus geminum imposuit tibi, Sequana, pontem:" his grand design for the bridge of the Rialto at Venice was unfortunately set aside for the actual one by Zanfragnino (sometimes called Scarpagnino). Vasari says, "Fra Giocondo, veduto quanto più possono molte volte appresso ai Signori e grandi uomini i favori, che i meriti, ebbe, del veder preporre *così sgangherato disegno* al suo bellissimo, tanto sdegno, che si partì di Venezia, ne mai più vi volle, ancorchè molto ne fosse pregato, ritornare." He had previously done a great service to Venice by causing part of the Brenta to disembogue itself at Chioggia. He ensured the safety of St. Peter's by constructing the foundations on a more extensive plan than Bramante had proposed.

Maria Bibiena, to whom Raphael was at last betrothed, died before they were married:—as her epitaph tells us, "ante nuptiales faces virgo est elata." There seems no ground to conclude that Raphael made any difficulties, and the story about his expectation of a cardinal's hat appears to be one of Vasari's careless assertions. The readiness expressed in the letter just quoted to fulfil the wishes of others, as if the writer had no feelings of his own, is quite in accordance with the habits of the age and country as regards the important subject in question. This very readiness, however, abundantly shows that Raphael had no objection to marriage in itself, but had been only prudently disposed to wait till his fortunes were established. At what period his acquaintance with the Fornarina began is uncertain: the name of *La Fornarina*, the only one by which his mistress is known, first occurs, by the way, in comparatively modern biographies, and the stories of the painter's first sight of this beautiful Trasteverina are still more modern inventions.* Passavant has unfortunately dis-

* Missirini's story is the subject of a letter of his, dated 1806: as he quotes no authority whatever, and, moreover, has the reputation of having often circulated such pseudo-traditions, we can only give it as *ben trovato*. After repeating the received tradition (confirmed or suggested by the name) that she was the daughter of a baker, and, with the semblance of historical accuracy, telling us that the father was "un fornaro a soccida" (one who bakes bread sent to him, but who does not sell it), and that he lived in Trastevere, near Sta. Cecilia, the writer thus proceeds:—"Attached to the house was a little

covered nothing new respecting so interesting a personage; the portrait he prefers, and of which he gives an engraving, is that in the Pitti palace; he considers the upper part of the picture only to be by the hand of the master. With respect to the autographic portraits of Raphael himself, that in the gallery at Florence, and a drawing, done at an earlier age, in the possession of Mr. Jeremiah Harman, are justly preferred. Engravings of both are given.

garden, surrounded by a wall low enough to permit a person on the outside to overlook the place by standing on tiptoe. Here the maiden frequently walked, and as her beauty was much talked of, it attracted the curiosity of the young men, and particularly of the students in art, who are always in search of the beautiful: in a word, all were anxious to see her. It happened that Raphael also passed at a moment when the maiden was in the garden, and when, not supposing she was observed, she was bathing her feet in the Tiber, for the river bounded the end of the garden. Raphael having raised himself on the wall, saw the young person and gazed on her attentively; he was always powerfully smitten by beautiful objects, and finding her most beautiful, he presently fell in love with her; his thoughts were centered in her, and he had no peace till she was his. Having thus bestowed his heart on this person, he found her much more refined, and at the same time more capable of an enduring attachment, than he could have supposed her station promised. His affection for her naturally increased, and at one time he could hardly apply himself to his art, except in her society." Then follows Vasari's story, that Agostino Chigi allowed her to stay with Raphael while he was at work in the Farnesina. According to an older fable which had been long rejected, but which Rumohr and others have revived, the Fornarina was the daughter of a potter in Urbino or its neighbourhood. As the oven is necessary in such an occupation, the name may have been connected again with this tradition.

Having had occasion frequently to allude to the inaccuracy of Vasari's historical details, we will now endeavour to do him justice in another respect, by abridging his touching picture of Raphael's genius and character:—

"His death was deeply deplored by the whole court, the more so as the Pope himself, who was much attached to him, wept bitterly. For us who survive him, it remains to imitate the good, nay excellent, method he has taught us, and as his great qualities deserve, and our duty bids us, to cherish his memory in our hearts, and speak of him with the high respect which is his due. For, in fact, through him we have the art in all its extent, colouring and invention, carried to a perfection which could hardly have been hoped, and in this universality let no human being ever dream of surpassing him. Among his extraordinary gifts there was one which especially excites my wonder; I mean that it should have been granted him to infuse a spirit among those who lived around him, so contrary to that which is generally prevalent among professional men. The painters — I do not allude to the humble-minded only, but to those of an ambitious turn, and very many of this sort there are — the painters who worked in company with Raphael lived in perfect harmony, as if all bad feelings were extinguished in his presence, and every base, unworthy thought had passed from their minds. This friendly state of things was never so remarkable as in Raphael's time; it was because the artists were at once subdued by his obliging manners and by his surpassing merit, but more than all by the spell of his natural character, which was so benevolent, so full of affectionate kindness, that not only men but even the very brutes respected him. It is said that if any painter of his acquaintance, or even any stranger, asked him for a drawing which could be of use to him, Raphael would leave his work to assist him. He always had a great number of artists employed for him, helping them and teaching them with the kindness of a father to his children, rather than as a master directing his scholars; for which reason, it was observed, he never went to court without

being accompanied from his very door by perhaps fifty painters, all clever in their way, who had a pleasure in thus attending him to do him honour. Happy those who were employed under him, for, it appears, that whoever endeavoured to follow his example turned out well: in like manner, those who hereafter shall take his works as models will be honoured accordingly in this life, and, if they resemble him in the excellence of his character, may hope to win the favour of Heaven in another."

The attached Castiglione writes thus to his mother, some months after Raphael's death: — "I am well; but I cannot fancy myself in Rome, because my poor dear Raphael is no longer here. Che Dio abbia quell' anima benedetta!"

Raphael was buried in the Pantheon (Sta. Maria della Rotonda), in a chapel which he had himself endowed, and near the spot where his betrothed bride had been laid. The immediate neighbourhood was afterwards selected by other painters as their place of rest. Baldassare Peruzzi, Giovanni da Udine, Pierino del Vaga, Taddeo Zuccaro, and others, are buried near. No question had ever existed as to the precise spot where the remains of the master lay; but a few years since the Roman antiquaries began to raise doubts even respecting the church in which Raphael was buried. In the end, permission was obtained to make actual search; and Vasari's account was in this instance completely verified. The tomb was found as he describes it, behind the altar itself of the chapel above mentioned. Four views of the tomb and its

contents were engraved from drawings by Cammuccini, and thus preserve the appearance that presented itself. The shroud had been fastened with a number of metal rings and points; some of these were kept by the sculptor Fabris, of Rome, who is also in possession of casts from the skull and the right hand. Passavant remarks, judging from the cast, that the skull was of a singularly fine form. The bones of the hand were all perfect, but they crumbled to dust after the mould was taken. The skeleton measured about five feet seven inches; the coffin was extremely narrow, indicating a very slender frame. The precious relics were ultimately restored to the same spot, after being placed in a magnificent sarcophagus, presented by the present Pope.

Several delegates from different institutions*, and other authorities, were appointed to be present when the tomb was opened: among these was the celebrated German painter, Overbeck, one of the worthiest of Raphael's followers; and to him we are indebted for some details, in a letter addressed to Director Veit, of Frankfort, in September, 1833. Passavant gives the letter entire, and completes the

* The members of the Academy of St. Luke were interested in this investigation, as they had been long in possession of a skull supposed to be that of Raphael, and which had been the admiration of the followers of Gall and Spurzheim. The reputation of this relic naturally fell with its change of name, the more irretrievably as it proved to have belonged to an individual of no celebrity.

account from other sources equally authentic. Overbeck's feelings on the first opening of the tomb, and on seeing the actual remains of the object of his homage exposed to view, are expressed in a striking manner; but he soon after remarks, "that, alas! the genius of the great artist remains buried far deeper than his bones."

No. X.

NOTES FROM KUGLER'S HAND-BOOK.

NOTE ON THE SUBJECTS OF THE PAINTINGS IN THE CAPPELLA SISTINA.

THE paintings of the Sistine Chapel have been often described, particularly with reference to their style: a few observations are here added on the connexion of the subjects. In the general plan Michael Angelo appears to have followed the ordinary series of Biblical types and antitypes familiar in his time, and indeed for centuries previously, by means of illuminated compendiums of the Old and New Testaments. The spirit of these cycles of Scripture subjects was the same from first to last: an ulterior meaning was always contemplated; every thing was typical. This was in accordance with the system of interpretation introduced by the earliest fathers of the church, confirmed and followed up by its four great doctors, and carried to absurd excess by some theologians of the middle ages. At first the incidents of the Old Testament were referred, as we have seen, only to the Redeemer; but in later times the Madonna was also typified in the heroines of the Jewish history. The cycles of subjects referring to both are by some supposed to have existed

in MS. illuminations so early as the ninth century (see Heinecken: Idée d'une Collection complète d'Estampes, p. 319).

The decoration of the Cappella Sistina was begun by various masters (see § XL. 15. and note), under Sixtus IV., about 1474: how far the original plan was to have extended, and what its general arrangement would have been, it is useless to inquire; but, certainly, the additions made at various times by Michael Angelo, and first begun in 1508, however different in style, were contrived by him to correspond sufficiently well in general sequence with the earlier works. A similar connexion seems to have been intended by Raphael, in decorating the remaining portion of the walls of the chapel, under these frescoes, with the tapestries from the cartoons; the subjects of which, taken from the Acts of the Apostles, thus still followed in chronological order (see a subsequent note). We proceed briefly to describe the general arrangement of the series treated or contemplated by his great rival.

On the wall over and on each side of the entrance-door Michael Angelo had intended to paint the Fall of Lucifer, so as to correspond with the Last Judgment on the altar-wall opposite. The sketches and studies which he had prepared for this work were afterwards badly copied in fresco by one of his assistants, in the church of the Trinità de' Monti, at Rome (Vasari: Vita di M. Angelo). This fresco has long ceased to exist; some

of the drawings may, however, yet come to light.* The subject in question would have formed the beginning of the cycle†; that cycle is continued by the subjects, on and immediately under the ceiling, of the Creation, the Fall of Man, &c., the Prophets and Sibyls, the Genealogy of the Redeemer, and four types from Jewish history (see the next note). One of these—perhaps it may be considered the last of the series as to place‡—representing Moses and the Brazen Serpent, may have been intended as the immediate connecting link between the subjects on the ceiling and the histories of Moses and Christ, by the older masters, below. Underneath these last again were the tapestries from Raphael's cartoons. These decorations, though moveable, were always arranged in the same order. The central subjects in the lower part of the altar-wall were originally the Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin; the first a fresco by Perugino; the latter, under it, a tapestry from one of Raphael's cartoons, now lost.§ Both,

* It is possible that some may be in the hands of collectors, but may be erroneously considered to belong to the Last Judgment.

† The order in which a contemplated series of designs was executed, was determined by various accidents, and had no necessary reference to their chronological sequence. Thus the subject of the Almighty dividing light from darkness, the first of the ceiling series, was the last executed.

‡ Vasari calls the Jonah which precedes it, the last of the single figures.

§ See the Editor's note, § XL. 15. Kugler's Handbook.

together with other works, were afterwards removed to make room for Michael Angelo's Last Judgment. Perino del Vaga ultimately made some fresh designs for tapestries to fill the narrow space which remained underneath that fresco, but these latter were never executed.

If we now compare this cycle with those frequently occurring in illuminated MSS., Italian and Transalpine, we shall find that the order of the subjects generally corresponds. It need not be objected that the designs in these MSS. (which, however, must not be judged by the very inferior inventions of the kind in the first attempts at wood-engraving) were unworthy the attention of a great artist; it is merely intended to show that the same series of Scriptural types, which appears to have been at least tacitly authorized by the church in the middle ages, was adopted by Michael Angelo. The series here more particularly alluded to is known by the name of the "Speculum Humanæ Salvationis," a title quite applicable to the general scheme of the Sistine Chapel. MS. copies of the work exist in the British Museum, in the Royal Library at Paris, and elsewhere. In this compendium the first subject is the Fall of Lucifer; then follow the Creation of Eve, the Disobedience of Man, the Deluge, &c.: in connexion with the Nativity of the Virgin we find the Genealogical "Stem of Jesse;" and in connexion with the Birth of Christ the Sibyl shows Augustus the vision of the Virgin and Child;

Esther and Judith appear as types of the Madonna; and David Slaying Goliath prefigures Christ's Victory over Satan in the Temptation.* In some of the printed editions the subject of Jonah immediately precedes the Last Judgment; the same connexion is observed in the altar-wall of the Cappella Sistina, and although there was an interval of many years between the completion of the two frescoes, this seems to prove that the entire series was always contemplated. In MS. Gospels, and some editions of the Biblia Pauperum, the subjects of the New Testament are surmounted or surrounded by busts of the Prophets. While remarking these coincidences we may observe that the story of Heliodorus, so finely treated by Raphael and alluded to by Dante (Purg. c. 20.), occurs in the Speculum Salvationis in connexion with Christ's Entry into Jerusalem (the Expulsion of the Money-changers).

In considering the whole cycle of the Cappella Sistina it will be seen that the Bible subjects by Michael Angelo are more abundant than the anti-types by the older Masters, who had occupied one wall with incidents from the life of Moses; but it would have been impossible to destroy these latter without also removing the opposite series from the New Testament, and this would have involved the necessity of repainting the whole, a labour which Michael Angelo, anxious to complete his under-

* The subject of the Brazen Serpent occurs in the Biblia Pauperum.

takings in sculpture, probably wished to avoid. If, however, we assume the possibility of his ever having contemplated the repainting of this lower series, in accordance with the wishes of Julius II., we may then conclude that some of his designs for New Testament subjects (of which a few were copied in a small size by Marcello Venusti) may have been intended for this purpose.

Even as it is, perhaps no earlier painter followed the order indicated in the cycles that have been quoted, more implicitly than Michael Angelo. The reason of this may have been that on other occasions a reference to particular dogmas of the church, and even to the history of particular saints, may have been demanded; but in the sanctuary of the Christian hierarchy, the most appropriate subjects were obviously such as had reference to the scheme of revealed religion as a whole. That this scheme should be expressed in accordance with some superstitions of the age was perfectly natural. The painters who preceded Michael Angelo in the decoration of the chapel had conceived, it is true, a grand cycle in the parallel between the Old and New Law, represented by the acts of Moses and Christ, but their plan seems to have been already exhausted in the space they covered. On the other hand, Michael Angelo's superior learning need not be adduced to account for his adoption of the cycle he selected: —the works which may have suggested it were accessible and familiar to all. Heinecken

remarks that MSS. of the Speculum Salvationis appear to have existed in every Benedictine convent; the earliest he saw, was, he supposes, of the 12th century.

The general order observed in these peculiar interpretations of Scripture was, as we have seen, closely followed, but in the selection of some subjects, as in the general treatment of all the designs in the chapel, Michael Angelo was probably influenced by the desire of displaying the human figure. Every subject he has introduced had, however, in the interpretations alluded to, its symbolical meaning, and generally demanded as its antitype a New Testament subject below. In the sources above-mentioned the type and antitype are confronted, and in many instances the allusions are carefully explained: this is the case in the Speculum Salvationis, and often in illuminated Bibles; that of Philip de Rouvre, duke of Burgundy (14th century), which is preserved in the Royal Library at Paris, is a curious example, and there are several in the British Museum.

ON THE FOUR SUBJECTS IN THE ANGLES OF THE CEILING.

These four subjects represent, it is true, remarkable deliverances of the Jewish nation, but it is obvious that such themes could only be selected to adorn a papal chapel, on account of their typical

meaning, and in order to explain them it is not sufficient to examine them in a spirit which is the result of our own time and creed; it is also necessary to consider them with reference to the faith they illustrate, as received at the period when they were done.

The great argument of the cycles of Scriptural representations, from first to last, was the Fall and the Atonement: to the latter every subject had reference, more or less directly; but it is to be remembered that certain types in the Old Testament were also considered to relate to the Virgin, and sometimes to the Church.

The three subjects in the centre of the ceiling—the Creation of Adam, the Creation of Eve, and the Fall and Expulsion from Paradise — were not unintentionally made so prominent in situation. The Creation of Eve, though occupying one of the smaller compartments, it is to be remarked, forms the central subject of the whole ceiling. It is always made thus important in the cycles of Scriptural types, in allusion to the Messiah being born of the woman alone. The four subjects at the angles—David Beheading Goliath, Judith with the Head of Holofernes, the Punishment of Haman, and the Brazen Serpent — are types of the Redemption; at the same time they are connected, as intermediate symbols, with the subjects of the ceiling. In the Speculum Salvationis (c. 13.), the first of these accompanies Christ's victory over Satan in

the Temptation, and is thus explained:—"Golias iste gygas superbus figuram tenet Luciferi, David autem Christus est, qui temptationem superbiæ viriliter superavit." In the Biblia Pauperum the same subject typifies the Redeemer overcoming the power of Satan by liberating the saints from the Limbus (pl. 28.). The inscription, "Signans te Christe Golyam conterit iste," appears, like the subject itself, to allude to the prophecy "ipse conteret caput tuum,"—"it shall bruise thy head."* This reading, which is strictly true to the original, occurs in the earliest versions of the Bible; yet in others, also very ancient, the passage is rendered "*ipsa* conteret caput tuum," according to which *the woman herself* bruises her enemy's head. The authorized Vulgate agrees with the latter translation; but if the subject of David and Goliath was intended to refer to the same passage, the conclusion is that both interpretations were recognised in the typical representations of the middle ages. The allusions in the sense of the Roman version are of course unequivocal. In the work first quoted a representation of the Virgin surrounded by the instruments of the passion, is the parallel subject to Judith after having beheaded Holofernes, and is thus described: "Maria per compassionem vicit adversarium nostrum dyabolum; ipsa enim præfigurata

* "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."—Gen. iii. 15.

per Judith quæ restitit Holoferni. Tunc impletæ sunt in ipsâ olim præmonstratæ figuræ, et quædam prophetica dicta sacræ scripturæ:—'Et tu Sathane insidiaberis calcaneo ejus (Mariæ) homines impugnando; ipsa conteret caput tuum per passionem te superando.'" 'The same prophecy, here distinctly quoted,—"it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel,"—is the key to the subjects in question, for the two opposite types are as evidently intended to illustrate the concluding words of the same verse: they allude to the permitted and limited power of the Evil One, and the ultimate redemption; but still with the same double application to Christ and the Madonna,—the Brazen Serpent surrounded by the suffering Israelites alluding to the former, the retributive Punishment of Haman* and Triumph of Esther, to the latter. The type of the Brazen Serpent is probably frequent in MS. Bibles; in the Biblia Pauperum it accompanies the Crucifixion (pl. 25.), with the inscriptions, "Icti curantur serpentem dum speculantur:"—"Eruit a tristi baratro nos passio Christi." The intercession of Esther with Ahasuerus is the type of the intercession of the Virgin; the two subjects appear together in the Speculum Salvationis (c. 39.); the following extract from the description

* The circumstance of Haman being represented crucified agrees with Dante's description of the same subject (Purg. c. 17.); and appears to be warranted by the original. Compare with Acts, x. 39.

explains their connexion:—"Tunc illa præcipit populum suum ab iniquo Aman defendi. Hester de gente Judæorum paupercula puella fuerat, et eam rex Assuerus pro omnibus eligerat et reginam constituerat. Ita Deus pro omnibus virginibus Mariam eligit—Et per ejus interventionem nostrum hostem condemnavit." The above allusions to the Madonna had been long consecrated in the church of Rome; that others far more recondite and fanciful were also common, may be gathered from the examples adduced and condemned by Erasmus in his "Ecclesiastes."

ON THE ORIGINAL SITUATION OF THE TAPESTRIES FROM THE CARTOONS BY RAPHAEL.*

It was unnecessary to divide the tapestries of the Cappella Sistina into two series; they form in fact but one, and it is of importance to consider them in this light, as there is a second series (of which, indeed, the author † proceeds to speak), done chiefly from designs by Raphael's scholars. The remarks that follow relate to the first entire series alone.

The general plan of the Sistine Chapel has been already described (§ XL. 15, *note*). The whole area, it was observed, is divided into two unequal parts

* This subject has been already briefly adverted to in the essay on the Life of Raphael, No. IX. of this collection.—Ed.

† Kugler.

by a white marble balustrade; the larger of these divisions, corresponding with the *sanctuarium* in the old Basilicas, was appropriated to the presbytery. The frescoes by Perugino and others on the walls below the windows, but still at a considerable height from the inlaid pavement, extended entirely round the chapel; the space underneath them was decorated with imitations of embroidered hangings, to represent the costly ornaments of this kind used in the ancient Byzantine and Roman churches. These decorations were separated at regular intervals by painted pilasters adorned with arabesques. Leo the Tenth, soon after his accession, appears to have conceived the plan of ornamenting the Presbyterium, or portion of the chapel within the balustrade, with real hangings. Eleven tapestries were accordingly executed under his auspicies from cartoons by Raphael, and thus restored, in a far more perfect form, the ancient splendour of the Christian temples. The tapestries were separated, like the painted hangings, by pilasters in the same material, adorned with arabesques, and underneath the large subject were narrower compositions in bronze colour, forming an apparent dado or socle. The new decorations were confined, as before observed, to the Presbyterium, thus giving it a more sacred character than the rest of the chapel.

At the altar was a tapestry representing the Coronation of the Virgin (Passavant, ii. 258.); above it still remained a fresco by Perugino, re-

presenting the Assumption. On the right (of the spectator, facing the altar), and on a line with the former subject, was the tapestry of the Conversion of St. Paul, and on the left that of the Calling of St. Peter (Miraculous Draught of Fishes); the first was under the fresco of the Birth of Christ, the latter under the fresco of the Finding of Moses (§ XL. 15, *note*). These six subjects filled the lower part of the altar wall before Michael Angelo's Last Judgment occasioned their removal, in the time of Paul III. On the right wall, next, and at right angles with, the Conversion of St. Paul, the order of the tapestries was as follows: the Punishment of Elymas, Paul and Barnabas at Lystra, Paul preaching at Athens, and the same apostle in prison during the earthquake. The last tapestry was much narrower than the rest, owing to the occupation of part of the space by the gallery of the choristers. On the opposite wall, beginning at right angles from the Calling of Peter, were Christ's Charge to Peter, the Martyrdom of Stephen, Peter and John Healing the Lame Man, and the Death of Ananias. The circumstance of the Pope's throne being on this side, again compelled a variety in the dimensions of the tapestries, and the Martyrdom of Stephen is thus of a much narrower form than the rest. These tapestries were copied in the colours of the Cartoons, but were more ornamented, the accessories being enriched with gold; the bronze-coloured designs underneath partly represented

scenes from the life of Leo the Tenth. (For the account of the original situation of the tapestries, as above described, with the exception of the Coronation of the Virgin, see the interesting Essay by the Chevalier Bunsen in the Beschreibung der Stadt Rom., vol. ii. book 2. p. 408.)

It was before observed, that works of art done under the auspices of the Church of Rome, for the decoration of her temples, may be generally assumed to have reference either to Christ, the Madonna, or the Church. With the Acts of the Apostles the history of the Church strictly begins, and Raphael selected the Acts of St. Peter, those of the Apostle of the Gentiles, and the death of the first martyr, to illustrate the commencement of her power and of her sufferings; the Coronation of the Virgin might be considered the type of her triumph. The same conditions must be remembered with regard to the smaller subjects from the life of Leo, for to a Romanist they represented the history of the reigning successor of St. Peter, and as such were strictly analogous. The associations connected with the original destination of works of art often add to their interest, or at least explain their intention; and it must be admitted, that the associations in this case are peculiarly important and striking; it is indeed but doing justice to the painter to be alive to them. The subject of the Calling of Peter, as we have seen, was immediately next the altar; whoever recollects, in the Cartoon, the deep humility

and devotion in the expression and attitude of Peter kneeling in the boat before Christ, may now also call to mind, that, at the distance of a few paces, the "Head of the Church" contemplated this scene from the highest of earthly thrones. These associations may be easily pursued by comparing the situation and import of the various subjects. The authority, the miraculous powers, the duties, and the sacrifices of the Church, the propagation of the faith, persecution, martyrdom—such were the warning and inspiring themes which Raphael selected as objects of contemplation for "the successor of St. Peter."

These associations and allusions would only be strikingly apparent when the works were in their original situations; yet, among the merits or recommendations of the Cartoons may be reckoned their being interesting in all places, and to all classes of Christians. But for this circumstance, perhaps, we should not now possess them, for when the treasures of art collected by Charles the First were sold, and such pictures as were deemed "superstitious" even ordered to be "forthwith burnt" (Journal of the Commons, July 23. 1645), the Cartoons would hardly have been repurchased by Cromwell, to whom we are indebted for preserving them to the nation, if they could have been considered to come within the proscribed class.

With regard to the execution of these works, we

have seen that Francesco Penni was Raphael's chief assistant.* The co-operation of other scholars is also to be recognised, yet in almost all the Cartoons the hand of the master is apparent; most perhaps in the Calling of Peter (the tapestry from which was to occupy so important a place), and least in the Paul Preaching at Athens, and Christ's Charge to Peter. As designs, they are universally considered the finest inventions of Raphael; at the time he was commissioned to prepare them, the fame of Michael Angelo's ceiling, in the same chapel they were destined to adorn, was at its height; and Raphael, inspired with a noble emulation, his practice matured by the execution of several frescoes in the Vatican, treated these new subjects with an elevation of style not perhaps equalled in his former efforts. The highest qualities of these works are undoubtedly addressed to the mind as vivid interpretations of the spirit and letter of Scripture; but, as examples of Art, they are the most perfect expression of that general grandeur of treatment in form, composition and drapery, which the Italian masters contemplated from the first, as suited to the purposes of religion and the size of the temples destined to receive such works. In the Cartoons this greatness of style, not without a due regard to variety of character, pervades every figure, and is so striking in some of the apostles as to place them on a level with the prophets of Michael Angelo.

* See Kugler's Handbook.

No. XI.

EXTRACTS FROM THE TRANSLATION OF GOETHE'S THEORY OF COLOURS.

[Murray, 1840.]

"THE translator, aware of the opposition which the theoretical views of Goethe have met with, intended at first to make a selection of such of the experiments as seemed more directly applicable to the theory and practice of painting. Finding, however, that the alterations which this would have involved, would have been incompatible with a clear and connected view of the author's statements, he preferred giving the theory itself entire; reflecting, at the same time, that some scientific readers might be curious to hear the author speak for himself even on the points at issue.

"Had Goethe contented himself with merely detailing his experiments and showing their application to the laws of chromatic harmony, leaving it to others to reconcile them as they could with the pre-established system, he would have enjoyed the credit he deserved for the accuracy and utility of his investigations. As it was, the uncompromising expression of his convictions only exposed him to the resentment or silent neglect of a great portion of the scientific world, so that for a time

he could not even obtain a fair hearing for the less objectionable or rather highly valuable communications contained in his book."

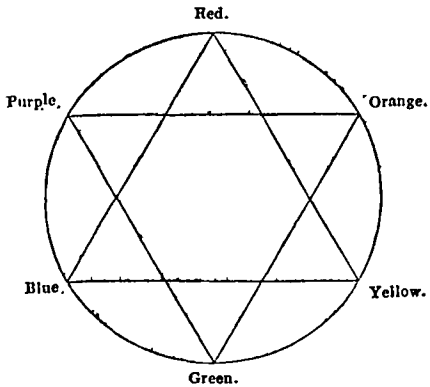
"In carefully abstaining from any comparison between the Newtonian theory and that of Goethe, the author may still be permitted to advocate the clearness and fulness of Goethe's experiments. The German philosopher constantly bears in mind, and sometimes ably elucidates, the phenomena of contrast and gradation, two principles which may be said to make up the artist's world, and to constitute the chief elements of beauty."

"One of the most interesting features of Goethe's theory, though it cannot be a recommendation of it in a scientific point of view, is, that it contains, undoubtedly with great improvements, the general doctrine of the ancients and of the Italians at the revival of letters. The translator has endeavoured, in some notes, to point out the connection between this theory and the practice of the Italian painters."

The translator's observations inserted in the appendix "are chiefly confined to such of the author's opinions and conclusions as have direct reference to the arts; they seldom interfere with the scientific propositions even where these have been considered most vulnerable."

NOTE C.

Almost every treatise on the harmonious combination of colours contains the diagram of the chromatic circle more or less elaborately constructed. These



diagrams, if intended to exhibit the contrasts produced by the action and re-action of the retina, have one common defect. The opposite colours — red and green; yellow and purple; blue and orange — are made equal in intensity; whereas the complemental colour pictured on the retina is always less vivid, and always darker or lighter than the original colour. This variety undoubtedly accords more with harmonious effects in painting.

The opposition of two pure hues of equal intensity, differing only in the abstract quality of colour, would immediately be pronounced crude and inharmonious. It would not, however, be strictly correct to say that such a contrast is too

violent; on the contrary, it appears that the contrast is not carried far enough, for, though differing in colour, the two hues may be exactly similar in purity and intensity. Complete contrast, on the other hand, supposes dissimilarity in all respects.

In addition to the mere difference of hue, the eye, it seems, requires difference in the lightness or darkness of the hue. The spectrum of a colour relieved as a dark on a light ground, is a light colour on a dark ground, and *vice versâ*. Thus, if we look at a bright red wafer on the whitest surface, the complemental image will be still lighter than the white surface; if the same wafer be placed on a black surface, the complemental image will be still darker. The colour of both these spectra may be called greenish, but it is evident that a colour must be scarcely appreciable as such, if it is lighter than white and darker than black. It is, however, to be remarked, that the white surface round the light greenish image seems tinged with a reddish hue, and the black surface round the dark image becomes slightly illuminated with the same colour, thus in both cases assisting to render the image apparent (58).

The difficulty or impossibility of describing degrees of colour in words, has also had a tendency to mislead, by conveying the idea of more positive hues than the physiological contrast warrants. Thus, supposing scarlet to be relieved as a dark, the complemental colour is so light in degree and

so faint in colour, that it might be called a pearl-grey; whereas the theorists, looking at the quality of colour abstractedly, would call it a green-blue, and the diagram would falsely present such a hue equal in intensity to scarlet, or as nearly equal as possible.

That vivid colour demands the comparative absence of colour, either on a lighter or darker scale, as its contrast, may be inferred again from the fact that bright colourless objects produce strongly coloured spectra. In darkness, the spectrum which is first white, or nearly white, is followed by red: in light, the spectrum which is first black, is followed by green (39—44). All colour, as the author observes (259), is to be considered as half-light, inasmuch as it is in every case lighter than black and darker than white. The distinction between the differences of degree and the differences of kind is important, since a just application of contrast in colour may be counteracted by an undue difference in lightness or darkness. The mere contrast of colour is happily employed in some of Guido's lighter pictures, but if intense darks had been opposed to his delicate carnations, their comparative whiteness would have been unpleasantly apparent. On the other hand, the flesh-colour in Giorgione, Sebastian del Piombo (his best imitator), and Titian, was sometimes so extremely glowing*

* "Ardito veramente alquanto, sanguigno, e quasi fiammeggiante." — *Zanetti della Pittura Veneziana*, Ven. 1771. p. 90.

that the deepest colours, and black, were indispensable accompaniments. The manner of Titian, as distinguished from his imitation of Giorgione, is golden rather than fiery, and his biographers are quite correct in saying that he was fond of opposing red (lake) and blue to his flesh.* The correspondence of these contrasts with the physiological phenomena will be at once apparent, while the occasional practice of Rubens in opposing bright red to a still cooler flesh-colour, will be seen to be equally consistent.

The effect of white drapery (the comparative absence of colour), in enhancing the glow of Titian's flesh-colour, has been frequently pointed out†: the shadows of white thus opposed to flesh often present, again, the physiological contrast, however delicately, according to the hue of the carnation.

It was before observed that the description of colours in words may often convey ideas of too positive a nature, and it may be remarked generally that the colours employed by the great masters are, in their ultimate effect, more or less subdued or broken. The physiological contrasts are, how-

Warm as the flesh-colour of the colourists is, it still never approaches a positive hue, if we except some examples in frescoes and other works intended to be seen at a great distance. Zanetti, speaking of a fresco by Giorgione, now almost obliterated, compares the colour to "un vivo raggio di cocente sole." — *Varie Pitture a fresco dei Principali Maestri Veneziani.* Ven. 1760.

* Ridolfi. † Zanetti, l. ii.

ever, still applicable in the most comparatively neutral scale.

The chromatic diagram does not appear to be older than the last century. It is one of those happy adaptations of exacter principles to the objects of taste which might have been expected from Leonardo da Vinci. That its true principle was duly felt is abundantly evident from the works of the colourists, as well as from the general observations of early writers.* The more practical directions occasionally to be met with in the treatises of Leon Battista Alberti, Leonardo da Vinci and others, are conformable to the same system. Some Italian works, not written by painters, which pretend to describe this harmony, are, however, very imperfect.† . A passage in Lodovico Dolce's Dialogue on Colours is perhaps the only one worth quoting. "He," says that writer, "who wishes to combine colours that are agreeable to the eye, will put grey next dusky orange; yellow-green next rose-colour; blue next orange; deep [red-] purple

* Vasari observes, "L'unione nella pittura è una discordanza di colori diversi accordati insième."—Vol. i. c. 18. This observation is repeated by various writers on art in nearly the same words, and at last appears in Sandrart; "Concordia, potissimum picturæ decus, in discordiâ consistit, et quasi litigio colorum."—P. i. c. 5. The source, perhaps, is Aristotle: he observes, "We are delighted with harmony, because it is the union of contrary principles having a ratio to each other."—*Problem.*

† See "Occolti Trattato de' Colori." Parma, 1568.

next dark-green; white next black, and white next flesh-colour."* The Dialogue on Painting, by the same author, has the reputation of containing some of Titian's precepts: if the above passage may be traced to the same source, it must be confessed that it is almost the only one of the kind in the treatise from which it is taken.

NOTE E.

"An important consideration suggests itself here, to which we shall frequently have occasion to return. Colour itself is a degree of darkness (σκιερόν); hence Kircher is perfectly right in calling it *lumen opacatum*. As it is allied to shadow, so it combines readily with it; it appears to us readily in and by means of shadow, the moment a suggesting cause presents itself. We could not refrain from adverting at once to a fact which we propose to trace and develop hereafter."— This opinion of the author is frequently repeated; and as it seems at first sight to be at variance with a received principle of art, it may be as well at once to examine it.

* "Volendo l' uomo accoppiare insième colori che all' occhio dilettino — porrà insième il berrettino col leonato; il verde-giallo con l'incarnato e rosso; il turchino con l' arangi; il morello col verde oscuro; il nero col bianco; il bianco con l' incarnato." — *Dialogo di M. Lodovico Dolce nel quale si ragiona della qualità, diversità, e proprietà de' colori.* Venezia, 1565.

In order to see the general proposition in its true point of view, it will be necessary to forget the arbitrary distinctions of light and shade, and to consider all such modifications between highest brightness and absolute darkness only as so many minor degrees of light.* The author, indeed, by the word shadow, always understands a fainter light.

The received notion, as stated by Du Fresnoy†, is much too positive and unconditional, and is only true when we understand the "displaying" light to comprehend certain degrees of half or reflected light, and the "destroying" shade to mean the intensest degree of obscurity.

There are degrees of brightness which destroy colour as well as degrees of darkness.‡ In general, colour resides in a mitigated light; but a very little observation shows us that different colours require

* Leonardo da Vinci observes: "L'ombra è diminuzione di luce, tenebre è privazione di luce." And again: "Sempre il minor lume è ombra del lume maggiore."— *Trattato della Pittura*, pp. 274–299.

N. B. The same edition before described has been consulted throughout.

† "Lux varium vivumque dabit, nullum umbra colorem."
De Arte Graphicâ.

"Know first that light displays and shade destroys
Refulgent nature's variegated dies."— MASON'S *Translation.*

‡ A Spanish writer, Diego de Carvalho e Sampayo, quoted by Goethe ("Farbenlehre," vol. ii.), has a similar observation. This destroying effect of light is striking in climates where the sun is powerful, and was not likely to escape the notice of a Spaniard.

different degrees of light to display them. Leonardo da Vinci frequently inculcates the general principle above alluded to, but he as frequently qualifies it; for he not only remarks that the highest light may be comparative privation of colour, but observes, with great truth, that some hues are best displayed in their fully illumined parts, some in their reflections, and some in their half-lights; and again, that every colour is most beautiful when lighted up by reflections from its own surface, or from a hue similar to its own.*

The Venetians went further than Leonardo in this view and practice; and he seems to allude to them when he criticises certain painters, who, in aiming at clearness and fulness of colour, neglected what, in his eyes, was of superior importance, —gradation and force of chiaroscuro.†

That increase of colour supposes increase of darkness, as so often stated by Goethe, may be granted without difficulty. To what extent, on the other hand, increase of darkness, or rather diminution of light, is accompanied by increase of colour, is a question which has been variously answered by various schools. Examples of the total negation of the principle are not wanting; nor are they confined to the infancy of the art. Instances, again, of the opposite tendency are frequent in

* Trattato, pp. 103. 121. 123. 324, &c.
† Ib. pp. 85. 134.

Venetian and early Flemish pictures resembling the augmenting richness of gems or of stained glass*: indeed, it is not impossible that the increase of colour in shade, which is so remarkable in the pictures alluded to, may have been originally suggested by the rich and fascinating effect of stained glass; and the Venetians, in this as in many other respects, may have improved on a hint borrowed from the early German painters, many of whom painted on glass.†

* Absolute opacity, to judge from the older specimens of stained glass, seems to have been considered inadmissible. The window was to admit light, however modified and varied, in the form prescribed by the architect, and that form was to be preserved. This has been unfortunately lost sight of in some modern glass-painting, which, by excluding the light in large masses, and adopting the opacity of pictures (the reverse of the practice above alluded to), has interfered with the architectural symmetry in a manner far from desirable. On the other hand, if we suppose painting at any period to have aimed at the imitation of stained glass, such an imitation must of necessity have led to extreme force; for the painter would set out by substituting a mere white ground for the real light of the sky, and would thus be compelled to subdue every tone accordingly. In such an imitation his colour would soon deepen to its intensest state; indeed, considerable portions of the darker hues would be lost in obscurity. The early Flemish pictures seldom err on the side of a gay superabundance of colour; on the contrary, they are generally remarkable for comparatively cool lights, for extreme depth, and a certain subdued splendour, qualities which would necessarily result from the imitation or influence in question.

† See Langlois, "Peinture sur Verre." Rouen, 1832; Descamps, "La Vie des Peintres Flamands;" and Gessert, "Geschichte der Glasmalerei." Stutgard, 1839. The antiquity

At all events, the principle of still increasing in colour in certain hues seems to have been adopted in Flanders and in Venice at an early period *; while Giorgione, in carrying the style to the most daring extent, still recommended it by corresponding grandeur of treatment in other respects.

The same general tendency, except that the technical methods are less transparent, is also to be remarked in some of the painters of the school of Umbria, the instructors or early companions of Raphael.† The influence of these examples, as well as that of Fra Bartolommeo, in Florence, is distinctly to be traced in the works of the great

of the glass manufactory of Murano (Venice) is also not to be forgotten. Vasari objects to the Venetian glass, because it was darker in colour than that of Flanders, France, and England: but this very quality was more likely to have an advantageous influence on the style of the early oil-painters. The use of stained glass was, however, at no period very general in Italy.

* Zanetti, "Della Pittura Veneziana," marks the progress of the early Venetian painters by the gradual use of the warm outline. There are some mosaics in St. Mark's which have the effect of flesh-colour, but on examination, the only red colour used is found to be in the outlines and markings. Many of the drawings of the old masters, heightened with red in the shadows, have the same effect. In these drawings the artists judiciously avoided colouring the lips and cheeks much, for this would only have betrayed the want of general colour, as is observable when statues are so treated.

† Andrea di Luigi, called L'Ingegno, and Niccolo di Fuligno, are cited as the most prominent examples. See Rumohr, "Italienische Forschungen." Perugino himself occasionally adopted a very glowing colour.

artist just named, but neither is so marked as the effect of his emulation of a Venetian painter at a later period. The glowing colour, sometimes bordering on exaggeration, which Raphael adopted, for a time, in Rome, is undoubtedly to be attributed to the rivalry of Sebastian del Piombo. This painter, the best of Giorgione's imitators, arrived in Rome, invited by Agostini Chigi, in 1511, and the most powerful of Raphael's frescoes, the Heliodorus and Mass of Bolsena, as well as some portraits in the same style, were painted in the two following years. In the hands of some of Raphael's scholars, again, this extreme warmth was occasionally carried to excess, particularly by Pierino del Vaga with whom it often degenerated into redness. The representative of the glowing manner in Florence was Fra Bartolommeo, and, in the same quality, considered abstractedly, some painters of the school of Ferrara were second to none.

In another Note (par. 177) some further considerations are offered, which may partly explain the prevalence of this style in the beginning of the sixteenth century; here we merely add, that the conditions under which the effect itself is apparent in nature, are perhaps more obvious in Venice than elsewhere. The colour of general nature may be observed in all places with almost equal convenience; but with regard to an important quality in living nature, namely, the colour of flesh, perhaps there are no circumstances in which its

effects at different distances can be so conveniently compared as when the observer and the observed gradually approach and glide past each other on so smooth an element and in so undisturbed a manner as on the canals and in the gondolas of Venice *; the complexions, from the peculiar mellow carnations of the Italian women to the sun-burnt features and limbs of the mariners, presenting at the same time the fullest variety in another sense.

At a certain distance—the colour being always assumed to be unimpaired by interposed atmosphere—the reflections appear kindled to intenser warmth; the fiery glow of Giorgione is strikingly apparent; the colour is seen in its largest relation; the *macchia*†, an expression so emphatically used by Italian writers, appears in all its quantity, and the reflections being the focus of warmth, the hue seems to deepen in shade.

As the gondola glides on, a nearer view gives the detail of cooler tints more perceptibly ‡, and the forms are at the same time more distinct. Hence Lanzi is quite correct when, in distinguishing the style of Titian from that of

* Holland might be excepted, and in Holland similar causes may have had a similar influence.

† Local colour; literally, the *blot*.

‡ Zanetti ventures to single out the picture of Tobit and the Angel in S. Marziale as the first example of Titian's own manner, and in which a direct imitation of Giorgione is no longer apparent. In this picture the lights are cool and the blood-tint very effective.

Giorgione, he says that Titian's was at once more defined and less fiery.* In a still nearer observation the eye detects the minute lights which Leonardo da Vinci says are incompatible with effects such as those we have described †, and which, accordingly, we never find in Giorgione and Titian. This large impression of colour, which seems to require the condition of comparative distance for its full effect, was most fitly employed by the same great artists in works painted in the open air or for large altar-pieces. Their celebrated frescoes on the exterior of the Fondaco de' Tedeschi at Venice, to judge from their faint remains and the descriptions of earlier writers, were remarkable for extreme warmth in the shadows. The old frescoes in the open air throughout Friuli have often the same character, and, owing to the fulness of effect which this treatment ensures, are conspicuous at a very great distance.‡

In assuming that the Venetian painters may have acquired a taste for this breadth§ of colour under

* "Meno sfumato, men focoso." — *Storia Pittorica.*

† "La prima cosa che de' colori si perde nelle distanze è il lustro, loro minima parte."— *Trattato*, p. 213; and elsewhere, "I lumi principali in picciol luogo son quelli che in picciola distanza sono i primi che si perdono all' occhio." — p. 128.

‡ See a note in the essay entitled "Styles and Methods of Painting," p. 174. — Ed.

§ The authority of Fuseli sufficiently warrants the application of the term breadth to colour; he speaks of Titian's "breadth of local tint."

the circumstances above noticed, it is moreover to be remembered that the time for this agreeable study was the evening; when the sun had already set behind the hills of Bassano; when the light was glowing but diffused; when shadows were soft —conditions all agreeing with the character of their colouring*; above all, when the hour invited the fairer portion of the population to betake themselves in their gondolas to the lagunes. The scene of this "promenade" was to the north of Venice, the quarter in which Titian at one time lived. A letter exists written by Francesco Priscianese, giving an account of his supping with the great painter in company with Jacopo Nardi, Pietro Aretino, the sculptor Sansovino, and others. The writer speaks of the beauty of the garden, where the table was prepared, looking over the lagunes towards Murano, "which part of the sea," he continues, "as soon as the sun was down, was covered with a thousand gondolas, graced with beautiful

* Zanetti quotes an opinion of the painters of his time to the same effect: — "Teneano essi (alcuni maestri) per cosa certa, che in molte opere Tiziano volesse fingere il lume — quale si vede nell' inclinarsi del sole verso la sera. Gli orizzonti assai luminosi dietro le montagne, le ombre incerte e più le carnagioni brunette e rosseggianti delle figure, gl' induceano a creder questo." — Lib. ii. Leonardo da Vinci observes, "Quel corpo che si troverà in mediocre lume fia in lui poca differenza da' lumi all' ombre. E questo accade sul far della sera — e queste opere sono dolci ed hacci grazia ogni qualità di volto," &c. — p. 336. Elsewhere, "Le ombre fatte dal sole od altri lumi particolari sono senza grazia." — p. 357; see also p. 247.

women, and enlivened by the harmony of voices and instruments, which lasted till midnight, forming a pleasing accompaniment to our cheerful repast." *

To return to Goethe: perhaps the foregoing remarks may warrant the conclusion that his idea of colour in shadow is not irreconcileable with the occasional practice of the best painters. The highest examples of the style thus defined are, or were, to be found in the works of Giorgione † and Titian, and hence the style itself, though "within that circle" few "dare walk," is to be considered the grandest and most perfect. Its possible defects or abuse are not to be dissembled: in addition to the danger of exaggeration ‡ it is seldom united with

* See "Francesco Priscianese De' Primi Principii della Lingua Latina," Venice, 1550. The letter is at the end of the work. It is quoted in Ticozzi's "Vite de' Pittori Vecelli," Milan, 1817.

† The works of Giorgione are extremely rare. The pictures best calculated to give an idea of the glowing manner for which he is celebrated, are the somewhat early works and several of the altar-pieces of Titian, the best specimens of Palma Vecchio, and the portraits of Sebastian del Piombo.

‡ Zanetti and Lodovico Dolce mention Lorenzo Lotto as an instance of the excess of Giorgione's style. Titian himself sometimes overstepped the mark, as his biographers confess, and as appears, among other instances, from the head of St. Peter in the picture (now in the Vatican) in which the celebrated St. Sebastian is introduced. Raphael was criticised by some cardinals for a similar defect. See "Castiglione Il Cortigiano," l. ii.

In the same paragraph to which the present observations

a plenitude of light and shade, or with roundness; yet, where fine examples of both modes of treatment may be compared, the charm of colour has perhaps the advantage.* The difficulty of uniting qualities so different in their nature, is proved by the very rare instances in which the union has been accomplished. Tintoret, in endeavouring to add chiaroscuro to Venetian colour, in almost every instance fell short of the glowing richness of Titian.† Giacomo Bassan and his imitators, even in

refer, the authority of Kircher is quoted; his treatise, "Ars magna lucis et umbræ," was published in Rome in 1646. In a portrait of Nicholas Poussin, engraved by Clouet, the painter is represented holding a book, which, from the title and the circumstance of Poussin having lived in Rome in Kircher's time, Goethe supposes to be the work in question. The abuse of the principle above alluded to is perhaps exemplified in the red half-tints observable in some of Poussin's figures.

The augmentation of colour in subdued light was still more directly taught by Lomazzo. He composes the half-tints of flesh merely by diminishing the quantity of white, the proportions of the other colours employed (for he enters into minute details) remaining unaltered. See his "Trattato della arte della Pittura," Milan, 1584, p. 301.

* In the Dresden Gallery, a picture attributed to Titian — at all events a lucid Venetian picture — hangs next the St. George of Correggio. After looking at the latter, the Venetian work appears glassy and unsubstantial, but on reversing the order of comparison, the Correggio may be said to suffer more, and for a moment its fine transitions of light and shade seem changed to heaviness.

† The finest works of Tintoret — the Crucifixion and the Miracolo del Servo (considered here merely with reference to their colour) may be said to combine the excellencies of Titian

their dark effects, still had the principle of the gem in view: their light, in certain hues, is the minimum of colour, their lower tones are rich, their darks intense, and all is sparkling.* Of the great painters who, beginning, on the other hand, with chiaroscuro, sought to combine with it the full richness of colour, Correggio, in the opinion of many, approached perfection nearest; but we may perhaps conclude with greater justice that the desired excellence was more completely attained by Rembrandt than by any of the Italians.

NOTE L.

One effect of Goethe's theory has been to invite the attention of scientific men to facts and appearances which had before been unnoticed or unexplained. To the above cases may be added the

and Giacomo Bassan on a grand scale; the sparkling clearness of the latter is one of the prominent characteristics of these pictures. Tintoret is reported to have once said, that a union of his own knowledge of form with Bassan's colour would be the perfection of painting. See "Verci Notizie de' Pittori di Bassano;" Ven. 1775, p. 61.

* That this last quality, the characteristic of Bassan's best pictures, was held in high estimation by Paul Veronese, is not only evident from that painter's own works, but from the circumstance of his preferring to place his sons with Bassan rather than with any other painter. (See "Boschini Carta del Navegar," p. 280.) The Baptism of Sta. Lucilla, in Boschini's time considered the finest of Giacomo's works, is still in the church of S. Valentino, at Bassano, and may be considered the type of the lucid and sparkling manner.

very common, but very important, fact in painting, that a light warm colour, passed in a semitransparent state over a dark one, produces a cold, bluish hue, while the operation reversed produces extreme warmth. On the judicious application of both these effects, but especially of the latter, the richness and brilliancy of the best-coloured pictures greatly depends. The principle is to be recognised in the productions of schools apparently opposite in their methods. Thus the practice of showing the light ground, more or less, through transparent shades, as a means of ensuring warmth and depth, is very common among the Dutch and Flemish painters. The Italians, who attained the same end by a solid but bright under-painting, still speak of internal light as the most fascinating quality in colour. When the light ground is entirely excluded, as in the works of some colourists, the warmest tints in shadows and reflections have been found necessary to represent it. This was the practice of Rembrandt frequently, and of Reynolds universally, but the glow of their general colour is still owing to its being repeatedly or ultimately enriched on the above principle. Lastly, the works of those masters who were accustomed to paint on dark grounds are often heavy and opaque; and even where this influence of the ground was overcome, the effects of time must be constantly diminishing the warmth of the colouring, for it is found that white lead (which enters largely into

the composition of pigments) has a tendency to become transparent, and thus the dark preparation becomes gradually visible through it. The practice of painting on dusky grounds was intended by the Carracci to compel the students of their school to aim at the direct imitation of the model, and to acquire the use of the brush; for the dark substratum could only be overcome by very solid painting. The result answered their expectations as far as dexterity of pencil was concerned, but the method was fatal to brilliancy of colour. An intelligent writer of the seventeenth century* relates that Guido adopted his extremely light style from seeing the rapid change in some works of the Carracci soon after they were done. It is important, however, to remark, that Guido's remedy was external rather than internal brilliancy; and it is evident that so powerless a brightness as white paint can only acquire the splendour of light by great contrast, and, above all, by being seen through external (comparative) darkness. The secret of Van Eyck and his contemporaries is always assumed to consist in the vehicle (varnish or oils) he employed; but a far more important condition of the splendour of colour in the works of those masters was the careful preservation of internal light by painting thinly, but ultimately with great force, on white grounds. In some of

* Scanelli, "Microcosmo della Pittura," Cesena, 1657, p. 114.

the early Flemish pictures in the Royal Gallery at Munich, it may be observed, that wherever an alteration was made by the painter, so that a light colour is painted thinly over a *dark* one, its opacity presents a strong contrast to the brilliancy of the rest of the work.' 'No quality in the mere vehicle could prevent this opacity under such circumstances.'

It matters not whether the effect in question is attained by painting thinly over the ground, in the manner of the early Flemish painters, and sometimes of Rubens, or by painting a solid light preparation to be afterwards toned to richness in the manner of the Venetians. Among the mechanical causes of the clearness of colours superposed on a light preparation may be mentioned that of careful grinding. All writers on art who have descended to practical details have insisted on this. From the appearance of some Venetian pictures it may be conjectured that the colours of the solid underpainting were sometimes less perfectly ground than the scumbling colours (the light having to pass through the one and to be reflected from the other). The Flemish painters appear to have used carefully-ground pigments universally. This is very evident in Flemish copies from Raphael, which, though equally impasted with the originals, are to be detected, among other indications, by the finely-ground colours employed.

NOTE M.

Without entering further into the scientific merits or demerits of this chapter on the "First Class of Dioptrical Colours," it is to be observed that several of the examples correspond with the observations of Leonardo da Vinci, and again with those of a much older authority, namely, Aristotle. Goethe himself admits, and it has been remarked by others, that his theory, in many respects, closely resembles that of Aristotle: indeed he confesses * that at one time he had an intention of merely paraphrasing that philosopher's Treatise on Colours.†

We have already remarked (Note on par. 150.) that Goethe's notion with regard to the production of warm colours, by the interposition of dark transparent mediums before a light ground, agrees with the practice of the best schools in colouring; and it is not impossible that the same reasons which may make this part of the doctrine generally acceptable to artists now, may have recommended the very similar theory of Aristotle to the painters

* "Geschichte der Farbenlehre," in the "Nachgelassene Werke." Cotta, 1833.

† The treatise in question is ascribed by Goethe to Theophrastus; but it is included in most editions of Aristotle, and even attributed to him in those which contain the works of both philosophers; for instance, in the Aldine Princeps edition, 1496. Calcagnini says the treatise is made up of two separate works on the subject, both by Aristotle.

of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries: at all events, it appears that the ancient theory was known to those painters.

It is unnecessary to dwell on the fact that the doctrines of Aristotle were enthusiastically embraced and generally inculcated at the period in question*; but it has not been observed that the Italian writers who translated, paraphrased, and commented on Aristotle's Treatise on Colours in particular, were in several instances the personal friends of distinguished painters. Celio Calcagnini† had the highest admiration for Raphael; Lodovico Dolce‡ was the eulogist of Titian;

* His authority seems to have been equally great on subjects connected with the phenomena of vision: the Italian translator of a Latin treatise, by Portius, on the structure and colours of the eye, thus opens his dedication to the Cardinal Ercole Gonzaga, of Mantua: — "Grande anzi quasi infinito è l'obligo che ha il mondo con quel più divino che umano spirito di Aristotile."

† In a letter to Ziegler the mathematician, Calcagnini speaks of Raphael as "the first of painters in the theory as well as in the practice of his art." This expression may, however, have had reference to a remarkable circumstance mentioned in the same letter, namely, that Raphael entertained the learned Fabius of Ravenna as a constant guest, and employed him to translate Vitruvius into Italian. This MS. translation, with marginal notes, written by Raphael, is now in the library at Munich. "Passavant, Rafael von Urbiño."

‡ Lodovico Dolce's Treatise on Colours (1565) is in the form of a dialogue, like his "Aretino." The abridged theory of Aristotle is followed by a translation of the Treatise of Antonius Thylesius on Colours; this is adapted to the same colloquial form, and the author is not acknowledged; the

Portius*, whose amicable relations with the Florentine painters may be inferred from various circumstances, lectured at Florence on the Aristotelian doctrines early in the sixteenth century. The Italian translations were later, but still prove that these studies were undertaken with reference to the arts, for one of them is dedicated to the painter Cigoli.†

The writers on art, from Leon Battista Alberti to Borghini, not to mention later authorities, either tacitly coincide with the Aristotelian doctrine, or openly profess to explain it. It is true this is

book ends with an absurd catalogue of emblems. The "Somma della Filosofia d'Aristotile," published earlier by the same author, is a very careless performance.

* A Latin translation of Aristotle's Treatise on Colours, with comments by Simon Portius, was first published, according to Goethe, at Naples in 1537. In a later Florentine edition, 1548, dedicated to Cosmo I., Portius alludes to his having lectured at an earlier period in Florence on the doctrines of Aristotle, at which time he translated the treatise in question. Another Latin translation, with notes, was published later in the same century at Padua — "Emanuele Marguino Interprete;" but by far the clearest view of the Aristotelian theory is to be found in the treatise of Antonio Vidi Scarmiglione of Fuligno ("De Coloribus," Marpurgi, 1591). It is dedicated to the Emperor Rudolph II. Of all the paraphrases of the ancient doctrine this comes nearest to the system of Goethe; but neither this nor any other of the works alluded to throughout this Note are mentioned by the author in his History of the Doctrine of Colours, except that of Portius.

† An earlier Italian translation appeared in Rome, 1535. See "Argelatus Biblioteca degli Volgarizzatori."

not always done in the clearest manner, and some of these writers might say with Lodovico Dolce, "I speak of colours, not as a painter, for that would be the province of the divine Titian."

Leonardo da Vinci in his writings, as in every thing else, appears as an original genius. He now and then alludes generally to opinions of "philosophers," but he quotes no authority ancient or modern. Nevertheless, a passage on the nature of colours, particularly where he speaks of the colours of the elements, appears to be copied from Leon Battista Alberti *, and from the mode in which some of Leonardo's propositions are stated, it has been supposed † that he had been accustomed at Florence to the form of the Aristotelian philosophy. At all events, some of the most important of his observations respecting light and colours, have a great analogy with those contained in the treatise in question. The following examples will be sufficient to prove this coincidence; the corresponding passages in Goethe are indicated, as usual, by the numbers of the paragraphs; the references to Leonardo's treatise are given at the bottom of the page.

* "Della Pittura e della Statua," lib. i. p. 16, Milan edition, 1804. Compare with the "Trattato della Pittura," p. 141. Other points of resemblance are to be met with. The notion of certain colours appropriated to the four elements, occurs in Aristotle, and is indeed attributed to older writers.

† See the notes to the Roman edition of the "Trattato della Pittura."

ARISTOTLE.

"A vivid and brilliant red appears when the weak rays of the sun are tempered by subdued and shadowy white." — 154.

LEONARDO.

"The air which is between the sun and the earth at sun-rise or sun-set, always invests what is beyond it more than any other (higher) portion of the air: this is because it is whiter." *

A bright object loses its whiteness in proportion to its distance from the eye much more when it is illuminated by the sun, for it partakes of the colour of the sun mingled with the colour (tempered by the mass) of the air interposed between the eye and the brightness.†

ARISTOTLE.

"If light is overspread with much obscurity, a red colour appears; if the light is brilliant and vivid, this red changes to a flame-colour." ‡ — 150 160.

* Page 237. † Page 301.

‡ In the Treatise *De Igne*, by Theophrastus, we find the same notion thus pressed: "Brightness (τὸ λευκὸν) seen through a dark-coloured medium (διὰ τοῦ μέλανος) appears red; as the sun seen through smoke or soot: hence the coal is redder than the flame." Scarmiglione, from whom Kircher seems to have copied, observes: — "Itaque color realis est lux opaca; licet id

LEONARDO.

"This (the effect of transparent colours on various grounds) is evident in smoke, which is blue when seen against black, but when it is opposed to the (light) blue sky, it appears brownish and reddening." *

ARISTOTLE.

"White surfaces, as a ground for colours, have the effect of making the pigments † appear in greater splendour." — 594. 902.

LEONARDO.

"To exhibit colours in their beauty, the whitest ground should be prepared. I speak of colours that are (more or less) transparent." ‡

e plurimis apparentiis colligere. Luna enim in magnâ solis eclipsi rubra conspicitur, quia tenebris lux præpeditur ac veluti tegitur." — *De Coloribus.*

* Page 122.

† Τὰ ἄνθη: translated *flores* by Calcagnini and the rest, by Goethe, *die Blüthe*, the bloom. That the word sometimes signified pigments is sufficiently apparent from the following passage of Suidas (quoted by Emeric David, "Discours Historiques sur la Peinture Moderne") ἄνθεσι κεκοσμημέναι, οἷον ψιμμυθίῳ, φύκει, καὶ τοῖς ὁμοίοις. Variis pigmentis ornatæ, ut cerussâ, fuco, et aliis similibus. (Suid. in voc. Ἐξηνθεσμέναι.) A panel prepared for painting, with a white ground consolidated with wax, and perhaps mastic, was found in Herculaneum.

‡ Page 114.

ARISTOTLE.

"The air near us appears colourless; but when seen in depth, owing to its thinness, it appears blue *; for where the light is deficient (beyond it), the air is affected by the darkness and appears blue: in a very accumulated state, however, it appears, as is the case with water, quite white."—155. 158.

LEONARDO.

"The blue of the atmosphere is owing to the mass of illuminated air interposed between the darkness above and the earth. The air in itself has no colour, but assumes qualities according to the nature of the objects which are beyond it. The blue of the atmosphere will be the more intense in proportion to the degree of darkness beyond it:" elsewhere—"if the air had not darkness beyond it, it would be white." †

ARISTOTLE.

"We see no colour in its pure state, but every

* Ἐν βάθει δὲ θεωρουμένου ἐγγυτάτω φαίνεται τῷ χρώματι κυανοειδὴς διὰ τὴν ἀραιότητα. "But when seen in depth, it appears (even) in its nearest colour, blue, owing to its thinness." The Latin interpretations vary very much throughout. The point which is chiefly important, is, however, plain enough, viz. that darkness seen through a light medium is blue.

† Page 136—430.

hue is variously intermingled with others: even when it is uninfluenced by other colours, the effect of light and shade modifies it in various ways, so that it undergoes alterations and appears unlike itself. Thus, bodies seen in shade or in light, in more pronounced or softer sun-shine, with their surfaces inclined this way or that, with every change exhibit a different colour."

LEONARDO.

"No substance will ever exhibit its own hue unless the light which illumines it is entirely similar in colour. It very rarely happens that the shadows of opaque bodies are really similar (in colour) to the illumined parts. The surface of every substance partakes of as many hues as are reflected from surrounding objects." *

ARISTOTLE.

"So again, with regard to the light of fire, of the moon, or of lamps, each has a different colour, which is variously combined with differently coloured objects."

LEONARDO.

"We can scarcely ever say that the surface of illumined bodies exhibits the real colour of those bodies. Take a white band and place it in the

* Page 121. 306. 326. 387.

dark, and let it receive light by means of three apertures from the sun, from fire, and from the sky: the white band will be tricoloured." *

ARISTOTLE.

"When the light falls on any object and assumes (for example) a red or green tint, it is again reflected on other substances, thus undergoing a new change. But this effect, though it really takes place, is not appreciable by the eye: though the light thus reflected to the eye is composed of a variety of colours, the principal of these only are distinguishable."

LEONARDO.

"No colour reflected on the surface of another colour tinges that surface with its own colour (merely), but will be mixed with various other reflections impinging on the same surface:" but such effects, he observes elsewhere, "are scarcely, if at all, distinguishable in a very diffused light." †

ARISTOTLE.

"Thus, all combinations of colours are owing to three causes; the light, the medium through which the light appears, such as water or air, and lastly the local colour from which the light happens to be reflected."

* Page 306. † Page 104. 369.

LEONARDO.

"All illumined objects partake of the colour of the light they receive.

"Every opaque surface partakes of the colour of the intervening transparent medium, according to the density of such medium and the distance between the eye and the object.

"The medium is of two kinds; either it has a surface, like water, &c., or it is without a common surface, like the air." *

In the observations on trees and plants more points of resemblance might be quoted; the passages corresponding with Goethe's views are much more numerous.

It is remarkable that Leonardo, in opposition, it seems, to some authorities †, agrees with Aristotle in reckoning black and white as colours, placing them at the beginning and end of the scale. ‡ Like

* Page 236. 260. 328.

† "De' semplici colori il primo è il bianco: benchè i filosofi non accettano nè il bianco nè il nero nel numero de' colori." — p. 125. 141. Elsewhere, however, he sometimes adopts the received opinion.

‡ Leon Battista Alberti, in like manner observes: — "Affermano (i filosofi) che le spezie de' colori sono sette, cioè, che il bianco ed il nero sono i duoi estremi, infra i quali ve n'è uno nel mezzo (rosso) e che infra ciascuno di questi duoi estremi e quel del mezzo, da ogni parte ve ne sono due altri." An absurd statement of Lomazzo, p. 190, is copied verbatim from Lodovico

Aristotle, again, he frequently makes use of the term black, for obscurity; he even goes further, for he seems to consider that blue may be produced by the actual mixture of black and white, provided they are pure.* The ancient author, however, explains himself on this point as follows — "We must not attempt to make our observations on these effects by mixing colours as painters mix them, but by remarking the appearances as produced by the rays of light mingling with each other." †

Dolce (Somma della Filos. d' Arist.); but elsewhere, p. 306, Lomazzo agrees with Alberti. Aristotle seems to have misled the two first, for, after saying there are seven colours, he appears only to mention six: he says — "There are seven colours, if brown is to be considered equivalent to black, which seems reasonable. Yellow, again, may be said to be a modification of white. Between these we find red, purple, green, and blue." — *De Sensu et Sensili.* Perhaps it is in accordance with this passage that Leonardo da Vinci reckons eight colours. — *Trattato,* p. 126.

* Page 122. 142. 237.

† On the authority of this explanation the word μέλαν has sometimes been translated in the foregoing extracts *obscurity, darkness.*

Raffaello Borghini, in his attempt to describe the doctrine of Aristotle with a view to painting, observes — "There are two principles which concur in the production of colour, namely, light and transparency." But he soon loses this clue to the best part of the ancient theory, and when he has to speak of the derivation of colours from white and black, he evidently understands it in a mere atomic sense, and adds — "I shall not at present pursue the opinion of Aristotle, who assumes black and white as principal colours, and considers all the rest as in-

When we consider that Leonardo's Treatise professes to embrace the subject of imitation in painting, and that Aristotle's briefly examines the physical nature and appearance of colours, it must be admitted that the latter sustains the above comparison with advantage; and it is somewhat extraordinary that observations indicating so refined a knowledge of nature, as regards the picturesque, should not have been taken into the account, for such appears to be the fact, in the various opinions and conjectures that have been expressed from time to time on the painting of the Greeks. The treatise in question must have been written when Apelles painted, or immediately before; and as a proof that Aristotle's remarks on the effect of semi-transparent mediums were not lost on the artists of his time, the following passage from Pliny is subjoined, for, though it is well known, it acquires additional interest from the foregoing extracts: —

"He (Apelles) passed a dark colour over his pictures when finished, so thin that it increased the splendour of the tints, while it protected the surface from dust and dirt: it could only be seen on looking into the picture. The effect of this operation, judiciously managed, was to prevent the

termediate between them."—*Il Riposo*, l. ii. Accordingly, like Lodovico Dolce, he proceeds to a subject where he was more at home, namely, the symbolical meaning of colours.

colours from being too glaring, and to give the spectator the impression of looking through a transparent crystal. At the same time it seemed almost imperceptibly to add a certain dignity of tone to colours that were too florid." "This," says Reynolds, "is a true and artist-like description of glazing or scumbling, such as was practised by Titian and the rest of the Venetian painters."

The account of Pliny has, in this instance, internal evidence of truth, but it is fully confirmed by the following passage in Aristotle, which, in reference to painting, appears to have been hitherto unnoticed: — "Another mode in which the effect of colours is exhibited is when they appear through each other, as painters employ them when they glaze (ἐπαλείφοντες) a (dark) colour over a lighter one; just as the sun, which is in itself white, assumes a red colour when seen through darkness and smoke. This operation also ensures a variety of colours, for there will be a certain ratio between those which are on the surface and those which are in depth." — *De Sensu et Sensili.*

Aristotle's notion respecting the derivation of colours from white and black may perhaps be illustrated by the following opinion on the very similar theory of Goethe: —

"Goethe and Seebeck regard colour as resulting from the mixture of white and black, and ascribe to the different colours a quality of darkness (σκιερὸν), by the different degrees of which they

are distinguished, passing from white to black through the gradations of yellow, orange, red, violet, and blue, while green appears to be intermediate again between yellow and blue. This remark, though it has no influence in weakening the theory of colours proposed by Newton, is certainly correct, having been confirmed experimentally by the researches of Herschel, who ascertained the relative intensity of the different coloured rays by illuminating objects under the microscope by their means, &c.

"Another certain proof of the difference in brightness of the different coloured rays is afforded by the phenomena of ocular spectra. If, after gazing at the sun, the eyes are closed so as to exclude the light, the image of the sun appears at first as a luminous or white spectrum upon a dark ground, but it gradually passes through the series of colours to black, that is to say, until it can no longer be distinguished from the dark field of vision; and the colours which it assumes are successively those intermediate between white and black in the order of their illuminating power or brightness, namely, yellow, orange, red, violet, and blue. If, on the other hand, after looking for some time at the sun, we turn our eyes towards a white surface, the image of the sun is seen at first as a black spectrum upon the white surface, and gradually passes through the different colours from the darkest to the lightest, and at last be-

comes white, so that it can no longer be distinguished from the white surface." * — See par. 40. 44.

It is not impossible that Aristotle's enumeration of the colours may have been derived from, or confirmed by, this very experiment. Speaking of the after-image of colours, he says, "The impression not only exists in the sensorium in the act of perceiving, but remains when the organ is at rest. Thus if we look long and intently on any object, when we change the direction of the eyes, a responding colour follows. If we look at the sun, or any other very bright object, and afterwards shut our eyes, we shall, as if in ordinary vision, first see a colour of the same kind; this will presently be changed to a red colour, then to purple, and so on till it ends in black and disappears." — *De Insomniis.*

N. B. The Editor has not inserted Note V. and the other interesting notes containing observations on the Italian masters, as Mr. Eastlake proposes to treat this subject at length in the 2nd volume of his Materials for a History of Oil-painting.

---

* "Elements of Physiology," by J. Müller, M. D., translated from the German by William Baly, M. D. London, 1839.

No. XII.

ON THE DECORATION OF A VILLA.

TO CHARLES LOCK EASTLAKE, ESQ., R.A., ETC.*

At length I write to claim the performance of your promise, viz. that you would give me your advice as regards the decoration of the house designed by M. de Chateauneuf, the drawings and plans for which you have seen. After some discussion, and a struggle on my part in favour of the Elizabethan, the perpendicular-gothic, or whatever the style is to be designated, M. de Chateauneuf has triumphed, and the Italian, or revived antique, (essentially the Grecian,) has been finally agreed on.

You are aware how strongly I feel that one of the best modes of advancing the Fine Arts, is by paying greater attention to the interior decorations of our houses, than has hitherto been the fashion in England. The best proof of your own opinion on this subject, is the kindness with which you de-

* These letters formed part of a little work called "The Country House," printed by Lady Mary Fox for the benefit of a school at Kensington. The letter to Mr. Eastlake is added to explain the reason of his communication. — Ed.

voted much time and labour to the designing and executing for me the Pompeian room so deservedly admired. Entertaining this view on the subject of ornament, makes me the more anxious to take all possible pains in selecting the style of decoration, so as the house should prove that its owner is a lover of art, and that it should, as far as is compatible with a reasonable economy, be considered in some degree as a pattern of what might be accomplished in the matter of decoration. I never think on the subject without calling to mind the principles laid down for the ornamenting a country house, in Mr. Rogers's "Invitation to a Friend:" indeed, looking to his intimate knowledge of the whole circle of Fine Arts, and lastly, the specimen of refined taste which his own town house exhibits, my *beau ideal* of a house is one decorated under his direction; but as this cannot be obtained, I trust that you, who possess so much of his spirit and refinement, will, as far as may be compatible with your engagements, afford me the benefit of your assistance. Although the subject of decoration, both as regards houses and public buildings, has been hitherto much neglected in this country, I think now every one is becoming fully alive to its importance. The establishment of the Government School of Design, in which, for the first time in England, the art of design, as applied to decoration, is systematically taught; — the opportunity afforded by the building of the Houses of Parlia-

ment; — the Committee of the House of Commons, which has already reported on the subject of their decoration; — and the Royal commission entrusted with the further consideration of the subject, — cannot fail to produce within a few years a great alteration in the views and taste of the public. I may here observe, that the School of Design, and the training of young workmen, will mainly tend to assist those who may be inclined to give up the ornamenting their saloons and halls with cheap printed papers, by producing persons who will be able, at a moderate cost, to execute the original designs of eminent artists, or to copy the great works of antiquity. Hitherto, except when foreigners were introduced, it has been scarcely possible to obtain the assistance of workmen capable of executing anything beyond the commonest and simplest scrolls or straight lines; or if such assistance were obtained, it could only be procured at a cost which put any extensive scale of decoration beyond the reach of any but the affluent.

As regards the style and mode of execution of the proposed decorations, I should, of course, wish to be guided by your judgment. Whether it may be expedient merely to copy or adapt from known examples, such as the baths of Titus, and the paintings of Pompeii, or from the great masters of modern times, such as the designs of Raphael and Giulio Romano; — or whether an entirely new style, founded on a study of the general prin-

ciples of art as applied to decoration, should be attempted, is for you to determine. Again, it may be a question, whether in different rooms a different course should be pursued, for the sake of variety. Respecting the vehicle, whether encaustic, fresco, or oil, or all three, should be used, must be determined by you.

You will observe there is the outer hall, and staircase, the inner hall, the library, the two drawing-rooms, and the dining-room, all requiring your attention.

The library, I should wish to be devoted as far as possible to art, especially as the books it will contain relate principally to painting and sculpture.

I remain, &c.,

H. B. K.

MR. EASTLAKE'S ANSWER.

I SHOULD willingly refer you to abler advisers if M. de Chateauneuf's house were as real as it deserves to be*; but although the conditions which you and the architect have proposed to yourselves

* The object of "The Country House," from which these letters are extracted, was merely to discuss the merits of the different styles of building applicable to villas, and their decoration. — ED.

have led to definite arrangements in the structure itself, a pleasing uncertainty must still exist with regard to the decorations. These depend for their effect on light and other circumstances not always to be reckoned on beforehand; so that their selection for a building which exists only in imagination must be, to a certain extent, a matter of speculation.

You refer to a certain "Pompeian" room; believe me, too much has been said of what you know was a rough experiment, to see the effect of a particular kind of decoration for small rooms, and which, as regards its details, can only deserve attention from the skill with which Mr. Harvey executed the animals that are introduced.

The word "decoration," however appropriate to fantastic ornaments, and in some degree to figures, has, as you know, been considered vilifying when applied to works that are addressed to the mind. But, as we have no other term, we must consent to use it in both meanings. It is, indeed, important to remember, that no works of art, however elevated, can dispense with the appeal, the impressive or winning appeal, to the eye. Thus much for our definition of terms.

As a general principle in decoration, I would recommend that the eye should be solely or chiefly addressed where a passing glance only can be given to the work, and that the attention should be more taxed where leisure and surrounding circumstances

permit or invite contemplation. The reverse of this would be manifestly wrong; but the recommendation itself is not to be understood too literally. Every display has its legitimate exuberance: the "over and above" in decoration can only be that of quality, for mere taste is supposed to define all that relates to quantity. As common poetic description sometimes exalts its subject less by accumulation than by substituting costly or choice materials for ordinary ones, so in art the augmenting excellence ascends from sense to thought. If, therefore, the intention to afford mental pleasure is very apparent even in situations where this may appear superfluous and in a manner thrown away, the impression must of itself be elevating. But the indispensable condition is, that a gradation should still be maintained; that higher excellence should still be in reserve. What must be the character of works of art to which Raphael's corridor in the Vatican forms the mere approach? The answer is given by the perfection of the works in the Stanze. All that is to be insisted on, therefore, is a due gradation in conformity with the principle first proposed. In the remarks that follow, I cannot strictly adhere to the plan of the house, but must often generalise; the observations submitted, if tenable at all, will, however, be easily applicable to your purpose.

The pavement of the halls might be enriched, but I can hardly approve the occasional practice of

the ancients in placing mosaic "histories" under their feet.* The forms and hues employed should be merely calculated to gratify the sight. Among other preliminary considerations, I would also include the nature of the mere surface as well as the distinction of every apartment. A pavement, for instance, however decorated, should still express the character of firmness and solidity. For this reason I would banish even the lowest kind of life, (that of plants,) and every approach to perspective. Geometrical forms would thus be alone admissible: the variety is infinite; but even here I would again exclude abrupt and irregular contrasts of colour, which have sometimes the effect of making the evenness of the surface doubtful: the last consideration is, indeed, applicable to carpets. With respect to the classic fashion of inscriptions on the threshold, I merely remark, that letters are only ornamental in architecture when disposed symmetrically within the space which constitutes their frame-work.

In approving the common practice of placing statues and bas-reliefs in the principal hall, I do not depart from the spirit of our first principles. A statue has generally the advantage of being seen in various points of view, and thus commands at-

* The passion for this kind of decoration was carried so far that the ornamented floor of the dining-room sometimes represented the scattered fragments of a repast. *Plin.* l. xxxvi. c. 25.

tention in situations where paintings could not. Associations of classic taste are naturally connected with the classic materials of marble or bronze; and architecture, when displayed as such, seems to acquire additional solidity by the presence of sculpture. But works of sculpture of the first excellence should be admitted to the library or drawing-room, and even fragments of rare beauty should be enshrined with like distinction. For the present, however, we are in the hall. I do not recommend mixing mural painting and sculpture: no painted devices should compete injudiciously with the bas-reliefs. But let us suppose that your bas-reliefs are in the outer hall, and that you have only some sculptured vases on detached pedestals in the inner hall or corridor, then by all means decorate the walls of the latter with arabesques: to these we shall return. In the staircase, also, it will be necessary to make your election between the two arts. I will assume that you decide for painting. Few people linger in a staircase; still fewer break their necks to look at a painted ceiling. If the scene affect the eye and the imagination agreeably, this may be considered sufficient. When we see the whole Pantheon on the ceiling and walls of great staircases, this undoubtedly might be defended on the ground that a mere passing impression of magnificence is intended: but the exuberance of quantity rather than of quality is here obvious. In whatever mode the walls of the stair-

case are adorned, the decoration should be entirely subservient to the architectural effect. This involves a more radical objection to the mythologic crowds before alluded to, because they have frequently the effect (and intentionally so) of destroying all idea of the angles of the building. I am of opinion, on the contrary, that the decorator should dispose his paintings in shapes which shall appear to grow out of and complete the architecture. The inclination of the pannelling of the wall to agree with the line of the stairs, may be considered incompatible with paintings: a horizontal termination, perhaps level with the chief landing-place, is essential, and the triangular spaces or sections of such spaces, between this and the stairs, had better be left nearly plain, and not very light in colour. Of all modes of destroying legitimate illusion, that of introducing painted figures, sometimes the size of life, where living figures must often come in contact with them, is the most effectual.

The compartment or compartments above that horizontal line might be painted in fresco, certainly not in oil on the wall, nor in the newly-revived encaustic, at least not till it has been further tried. The figures should not extend to the angles of the walls where the staircase turns; the pseudo or real compartments which form the frames might finish at a little distance from the angle; the real wall is, in short, never to be lost sight of; and if ocular illusion is attempted at all, it should be

rather with a view to complete and enrich the architectural forms than to destroy them. Where the light is unfavourable for painting, the flattest style of bas-relief is still admissible. But as you are especially desirous of having your staircase coloured, I really can propose nothing fitter to gratify the eye and imagination merely, than the more refined but at the same time familiar subjects of the Greek mythology; such as the personifications of poetry, the progress of the hours and of light, the seasons, and so forth. Such subjects afford the best materials for mere beauty of line and drapery, for composition generally, and, if not too statue-like, for colour; and even when they suggest no profounder range of thought, (not that their import is necessarily thus superficial,) they leave an elegant impression on the mind. The objection is, that they are old; but there would be some novelty in treating them as detached compositions, instead of beclouding and peopling the whole space in the style of the seventeenth century. It is to be remarked, that Raphael and Michael Angelo bounded their compositions of this kind by definite forms, especially on ceilings. Pietro da Cortona and the machinists generally, were as intent on destroying the connection between painting and architecture as the great masters were to preserve it.

But this separation of the compositions into compartments supposes at once a great latitude in the choice of subjects. Milton's smaller poems,

and many other English sources, might be preferred to classic inventions; only it should be remembered, that fresco, from the nature of its means, is privileged to aim at the ideal rather than the actual world, and that the character of the decorations required for the place must necessarily influence the selection and treatment of the subjects. Dark effects are equally unfit for the situation and for the powers of fresco. In the ornamented divisions of the compartments, perhaps partial gilding might be employed with better effect than colours; on the ceiling both might be introduced, (in merely decorative forms,) unless your staircase ends in light, in which case your glass must of course be ornamented, even if colourless.

Dining-rooms, strictly so called and employed, are generally unadorned with pictures: this hardly seems necessary. In theory we may admit that subjects requiring some contemplation would be out of place in a room exclusively devoted to "the table;" but portraits of celebrated individuals, and landscapes, although they cannot be duly examined in such moments, may convey associations, to which the spectator, even if not particularly conversant in pictures, is supposed to be alive at all times. Portraits of the class alluded to, as historic texts, are connected with *time;* as landscape, especially if founded on actual scenes, may suggest the memory of *place.* A room used for the purpose in question,

and for nothing else, is, however, not the place where fine works of art should be bestowed; and I incline to think that this is the fittest field for small frescoes and arabesques. This, in short, is one of the occasions to please the eye and the imagination merely. Accordingly, in the mode proposed, no definite idea is presented to the mind, but an air of elegant and festive splendour surrounds the guests. There should, however, be endless variety; scarcely a form should be repeated in the details, although an architectural symmetry is, as usual, to be preserved in the masses.

A dining-room *per se* is not uncommon; but a professed and exclusive breakfast room supposes a degree of order in the family migrations, to which the muses could hardly be expected to accommodate themselves. Nevertheless, to complete my catalogue, I will suppose one; or rather I will suppose that one of your drawing-rooms is used chiefly as a morning room. Indeed, without condemning a family to betake themselves to particular rooms at stated hours, it may be allowable to decorate and furnish apartments on such a supposition, by way of ensuring a marked and agreeable variety of character. Lucullus had even a series of dining-rooms from the "Apollo" downwards; and we learn from Vitruvius*, that the opulent Romans changed the scene of their banquets according to the season of the year. The morning has its own

* De Architect. l. vi. c. 7.

feelings even for those whom affluence frees from any kind of labour. The purposes of the day are unfinished — everything is contingent. Under such circumstances the character or subject of pictures is to be adapted to the mind — not the mind to the subject. The open face of nature by sea and land may here enliven the walls, and agree with the excursive feelings of the hour. The chase and its incidents may here triumph. The English pastoral is here strictly in its place. Solemn themes, solemn effects, should not be admitted; while all that responds to buoyancy of spirit would, on the contrary, be appropriate. It need not be gravely objected, that accidental or even average states of feeling may be little in unison with the impressions which the arts profess to give; for the same objection is frequently applicable to all the accompaniments of civilised life, nay, to the beauties of nature, which so often appeal even to cultivated human sympathies in vain. The occasional contradiction is unavoidable, where, of two conditions, one is permanent, the other mutable.

Corridors on the ground-floor, or even upstairs in houses where pictures do not abound, may be fitly decorated with arabesques. The same kind of ornament might be applied to garden pavilions, and, in the present instance, even to your portico next the lake if no statues are there, but not to conservatories, where the conventional forms and tints of art would contend injudiciously with

nature. In these decorations it is absolutely necessary to set out with an architectural scheme, and subdivide the spaces with some attention to congruity and subordination. In the details, pleasing masses and forms are essential, because here nothing can be concealed; there is, strictly speaking, no chiaroscuro, no perspective: form and colour are the chief means. The possibility of approaching and even coming in contact with the painted wall, suggests the necessity of a small scale in the objects, and of precision and delicacy of outline; yet, from the circumstance of the forms and hues being relieved on a light ground, they are at the same time effective at a considerable distance.* Stucco ornaments in very low relief, mixed with the painting, are admissible, (as they can hardly be said to come under the head of sculpture,) but they require a strong light to display them.

I cannot recommend frescoes for the sitting-rooms of dwelling-houses. The sum of enjoyment to be derived from one or two large paintings is not to be compared to that which the contributions of various schools can afford, even assuming the

* The best examples of decorations of this kind are now accessible to all, in a recent work by Thürmer and Gutensohn, containing the arabesques of the Vatican, the Farnesina, the Villa Lanti, and the Villa Madama, edited by Mr. Ludwig Gruner, and published by Mr. Murray. With this work may be classed the publications of Zahn, on the ornamental inventions of Giulio Romano at Mantua, and on the decorations of Pompeii.

highest merit. Some frescoes of the Villa Madama near Rome, from the school of Raphael, show that such works may be beautifully executed in a small size, but they still seem fitter for open galleries than for rooms. I have only ventured to except the dining-room. The impossibility of change in the apartments we live in is an unpleasant feeling; in a public building, on the contrary, it is satisfactory, and a staircase or a professed dining-room approaches this character. I may here observe, that a staircase covered with ancient family portraits is seldom agreeable to the eye; indeed if it were a desirable kind of decoration, centuries must often elapse before the materials would be ready. The first impression on seeing a quantity of portraits in a staircase is, that it is an accidental if not a troublesome accumulation, and that there is no room for the pictures in better situations. Far be it from me to speak with any disrespect of the taste for family portraits, so peculiar to the English, and so calculated, as Johnson said, to foster their "domestic charities;" but I hold it not always necessary to place the portraits of the household in prominent situations. The interest such works inspire is, in most cases, strictly domestic and private. The portrait has, in short, no pretension to be conspicuous to all eyes till the individual is celebrated, or till the work of art is canonised. These conditions, I admit, may often exist from

the first moment; but then, *à fortiori*, a staircase is not the place for such a production. The ostentatious Romans appropriated one of the most public rooms of the house (the *tablinum*) to genealogies, records, and inscriptions relating to the family history, and covered the remaining space — often the *atrium* as well — with the portraits and busts of their ancestors.* This does not appear to have been the custom with the Athenians.

We have decided against frescoes in what are called sitting-rooms: your oil pictures are, however, to be selected. I shall consider the library as distinct from the drawing-rooms; but it is quite possible to blend their character. The library in the ducal palace at Urbino had a room or study adjoining it, decorated with portraits (in this case, by the way, they appear to have been frescoes) of learned men of all ages. In a library, literally to be used as such, pictures of extensive interest seem to be inappropriate. They may be said to divert the attention from the business or amusement of the place. But the portrait of the poet, or of the sage, is a source of pleasing and elevating associations, and may sometimes command a deep interest. The library may contain the cabinets of gems and medals, the collections of engravings, the terra cottas, &c.; or if the drawing-room is ample enough, all these treasures of *virtù* may be deposited there. I prefer a library without coloured

* Juv. Sat. 8.; Plin. l. xxxv. c. 2.

decorations; the wood-work may be carved in flat relief, even to the panels of the walls; a mode of decoration now beautifully supplied by embossed leather, which need not be dark in colour. Whatever colour appears, except in the portraits, miniatures, or illuminations hung around, should be in the books; these should strike the eye, and be, so to speak, in the foreground of the picture. Vases, or busts, may surmount the cases. The ancients preferred the latter; and many, like Asinius Pollio, collected in their libraries the authentic, and even imaginary, portraits of great men. Among the latter was the bust of Homer.* But the light is generally so unfavourable in the upper part of modern rooms, that busts, when placed so high, are reduced to mere ornaments, and require the addition of names. This, indeed, is not objectionable in any case, for the interest of a portrait commonly depends on historical associations. I see no objection even to inscribing both the subject and the name of the master under works of art generally: a volume bears its title and author's name; and pictures, to many, are as sealed books till inquiry is stimulated or interest quickened by similar means. When the description is too long to admit of this, the words "See Catalogue, No. —" might be added.

If colour be admitted anywhere in the library, it might be in subjects on the ceiling, allowable

* Plin. l. xxxv. c. 2.

here, if at all, in the region of easy chairs and occasional meditation; perhaps too, to a certain extent, in the windows. The introduction of subjects on ceilings has not been recommended generally, but in the system of arabesque painting the universal decoration of the walls requires to be carried into the ceiling. Sculpture, from the reasons already given, or rather in accordance with the same taste, is quite admissible in the library. Cicero frequently writes to his friend at Athens, to send him any good works in sculpture, fit to adorn the library and residence of a man of letters.*

But the choicest works of taste should unquestionably be in the room most occupied in hours of calm seclusion and leisure; and in order to find wall enough for the pictures, this may be assumed to be the principal drawing-room. Here, therefore, may be the best specimens of painting, and even of sculpture, if the space permits: here, the chimney-piece may be by Flaxman, and the doors of the print-case by Stothard. The pictures cannot be very large, on account of their number and the

* Epist. ad Attic. l. i. c. 3. 8, 9, 10, &c. It is remarkable that a bas-relief, in the finest Greek style, representing a philosopher reading, was found in the ruins of Cicero's Tusculan villa. Some English sculptors and myself, during an excursion from Rome, I may almost say, discovered this marble, walled into the staircase of the Episcopal palace at Grotta Ferrata. A mould was afterwards taken from it, through the exertions of Mr. Gibson, and the cast is now common in Rome. The marble was, I think, afterwards removed to the Vatican.

size of the room. This, the objection which in a great measure excludes the grandest works from our dwelling-houses, was met by the Italians, and by Nicolo Poussin, by reducing the grand to domestic conditions. If you have only small pictures, however, you cannot cover the upper part of the walls, for you are not supposed to have any work of art *here* which can be sacrificed.

Enlightened connoisseurs see excellence both in the Dutch and Italian schools, but they are often embarrassed in arranging them together. I am convinced, however, from instances I have seen, that this is to be accomplished satisfactorily. It is sometimes argued, that no one reads Milton and Crabbe alternately; but this is hardly a parallel case. Many go to a gallery to look at a particular picture, and see nothing else; the eye is blind when the attention is not actively exerted. So in a room, the spectator selects his favourites — his favourites at least for the time, and scarcely looks beyond them. At another moment, he will perhaps direct his undivided attention to works which he passed over on a former occasion. A certain congruity is sometimes to be accomplished, by attending to impressions rather than names and schools. Many an Italian picture would not be out of place with the Flemish and Dutch school; while Vandyck, Ruysdael, Cuyp, and others, might sometimes harmonise in many respects with the genius of the south. The arrangement of pic-

tures comprehends some of the difficulties which the artist experiences in the production of *one;* for a certain balance and repose are as essential for the eye, as an harmonious impression for the mind. Much must, therefore, depend on the nature of the materials; and the (assumed) different character of your two drawing-rooms may here be an advantage.

You, I know, will not ask whether the productions of the English school are admissible in this "Tribune" as well as elsewhere. Such is the variety of English art, that the more refined Dutch, the Flemish, and the Italian taste, may be recognised in it by turns, and no modern pictures harmonise with the scheme of colour and effect which characterise the master-works of former ages so well as the English of the last century. Thus much of schools; and those we have not mentioned may be tried by the same tests.

With regard to subjects, the mind as well as the eye, must be respected: the *ethos* of painting is quite compatible with familiar and homely subjects; and, on the other hand, the greatest Italian masters have sometimes sought for poetic impressions in regions where it would be unsafe to follow them. But, with this reservation, you must not be exclusive: various minds, or the same mind in various moods, will like variety of aliment. In other situations, which we have had occasion to consider, the subject has been in a great degree calculated on the probable feelings of the spectator;

here, the subject is independent, because the attention is free, and the whole art appeals by turns to the whole range of thought. The leisure of cultivated human beings should be so far complimented as to assume that all the strivings of the mind are worthy to be ministered to. It is a mistake to suppose that solemn or even terrible themes are always objectionable; I believe it will be found that the grander efforts of invention (I speak of works by the ancient masters) are very generally appreciated by the gentler sex. On the other hand, the fondness for humbler subjects is not always referable to the homeliness of the incident represented. The subject often acquires elevation, and commands respect, by the evidence of mental labour and power in the artist. To a true connoisseur, this skilful application of principles derived from universal nature supersedes the mere subject; and the idea which he recognises, whatever may be its vehicle, is grand and poetical. Less experienced observers are often deceived by the title of pictures: "A Court Yard" (de Hooghe) sounds unpromising enough; but when it is seen that the painter has represented *daylight* with its consequent harmony, and that all is subservient to this, his aim must be acknowledged to be dignified. It is to be observed, too, that the influence of this high aim on the part of the artist often extends itself to the treatment of the materials which constitute his ostensible subject. It is easy to see

from the unaffected feeling, as well as from the *relative* character of the execution in some (though not all) of the Dutch masters, that the real subject of their meditation was noble. I should like to see a *catalogue raisonné* on the principle to which I have alluded, distinguishing the title of a picture from the real intention of the artist. Many frequenters of the National Gallery criticise Reynolds's Three Graces, whence it appears they are not sufficiently aware that the personages in question are portraits of three fashionable ladies of the day, *under the name* of the Graces, &c. If some titles could be translated, what a contrast the real import of the work would present to the actual name! What a change, for instance, from the modesty of some of Turner's titles, "Crossing the Brook," — "Coal-barges in the Thames: Night," to the beauty and grandeur which would require to be approached (for they ought not to be definable) in language!

With respect to the colour of the walls on which pictures are hung, opinions differ much. I am quite aware that it is necessary to consider wall, pictures, gold frames, and all, in relation to general effect: the gold, especially, is to be treated as part of the coup-d'œil. But, though I remember examples of light walls hung with pictures, producing an agreeable effect, I prefer a colour which displays the pictures more, and must also maintain, that living pictures are seldom seen to the best advantage against a bright ground; the

quantity of actual light (it may always be assumed) making reflected light unnecessary. My idea is, that the wall should not be so light as the lights of the pictures; and this supposes a sufficiently low tint. Of such colours, the most agreeable will, I believe, be that which is calculated to give effect to the frames; either by a difference of degree or of kind — either by a deeper, richer gold colour, or by a red inclining to purple; of these, the former would look best by night. I need not recommend you to avoid too much unbroken polish in the frames, since this is now very generally disapproved of.

I have hitherto, as you see, exercised, apparently without scruple, the dictatorial authority with which you have invested me. As a relief, I intended to have given you some extracts from an Italian ethical work (printed about the middle of the sixteenth century*) in which there is a chapter on the "ornamenti della casa;" but they would have been, perhaps, little suited to your purpose, and I have already far exceeded the space I ought to occupy. As I may not, however, again have an opportunity of alluding to this work, which is not unimportant in the history of Italian art, I wish briefly to advert to one or two points.

The list of pictures given seems to prove that

* Castiglione Saba, Ricordi ovvero Ammaestramenti, &c. Milano, 1559.

the Italians long remained faithful to the older masters. The names of Titian and Correggio do not appear! (I hope you will not follow the Catalogue in such defects.) This is not to be explained by supposing that the writer speaks for himself only; for he repeatedly says, "Some like to ornament their rooms with the works of ——, others with those of ——," and so on, as if professing to give a variety of tastes. I can only account for this in one way: the author lived in Milan, and it would appear that the style of Leonardo, closely allied as it was to that of the schools of Central Italy, long continued to influence the Milanese amateurs as well as the Milanese painters.

I pass over the musical instruments, which, beside their chief use, "piacciono assai all' occhio," especially when made by Lorenzo da Pavia, or Bastiano da Verona. Donatello, Michael Angelo, Alfonso Lombardi, and Cristoforo Romano, are the sculptors he enumerates. The terra cottas are by Paganino da Modena; the bronzes by Verocchio and Pollaiuolo. Beside antique medals, he admires those of Giovanni Corona of Venice, together with the chasings of Caradosso. Among the works of the latter, he mentions a silver inkstand in basso rilievo, "fatica d' anni venti sei! ma certo divina." Cameos and intaglios should be, he thinks, by the hand of Pietro Maria, Tagliacarne, &c., but above all by Giovanni di Castello.

Now for his list of painters: Filippo Lippi,

Mantegna, Giovanni Bellini, Leonardo da Vinci, although, he adds, he left but few works.* Then follow the younger Lippi, and Perugino, and, heralded with appropriate honours, Raphael, accompanied by Giulio Romano. Pietro della Francesca, and Melozzo da Forlì, are characterised well, as indeed are all the painters. He next mentions some artists, all monks, who wrought in inlaid wood (commesso, tarsia); but his highest praises in this department are reserved for Fra Damiano da Bergamo, the artist of the choir of S. Domenico at Bologna. The engravings he speaks of are by Albert Durer and Lucas van Leyden.

Tapestries from Flanders, carpets from Syria, Turkey, and Barbary, figured leather from Spain, are all admitted to be desirable ornaments: "Tutti questi ornamenti ancora commendo perchè arguiscono ingegno, politezza, civilità e cortegiania." The author next describes his own treasures; but, except a head by Donatello and some rare books, he has nothing to boast of. His tastes are characteristic of the age: though a priest, his ambition is to have a collection of arms and armour, if wrought by a good Italian or German armourer; and above all, he aspires to the possession of a large steel mirror, of the kind made by Giovanni della Barba, a German: the mirrors of glass then in use, were,

* The author says he was an eye-witness of the Gascon crossbowmen making a target of Leonardo's model for the equestrian statue of Francesco Sforza.

it appears, commonly small and imperfect. The author's judicious observations (to which I refer you) on the chief use of mirrors may reconcile you to their occasional introduction over chimney-pieces, which, for the rest, are by no means the best places for pictures.

The chapter ends with a pleasing story about a mirror and a lady, and Galeazzo Visconti, Duke of Milan; a story copied by Addison (though without acknowledging the source) into the Spectator. The incident would not be an unworthy *pendant* for "Collalto,"* and might have furnished a subject for the graceful pencil of Stothard; but it is time to make an end.

I am, &c.,

C. L. E.

* See Rogers's Italy.

No. XIII.

ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE FINE ARTS.

(A FRAGMENT.)

INTRODUCTION.

To hint at theories of taste is to invite opposition. The reader who gives his attention to them at all is eager to be an objector: he sets out by fancying that his liberty is in danger, and instinctively prepares to resist the supposed aggression. There seems to be an impatience of all controlling principles in regard to questions in which individual experience, however narrow, can form a criterion of its own; and in which the influence of habit, for once unchallenged by the moralist, may supersede the exercise of reason.

It is not to be assumed that those even who have professed to treat these questions on purely rational grounds have been themselves exempt from temporary and local prejudices, or from the no less enthralling spirit of mere opposition to them. But this tribute, direct or indirect, to the

force of habitual impressions, even at the expense of philosophic consistency, is itself favourable to the doctrine of a criterion in taste. The existence of relatively leading opinions in the midst of individual differences suggests the possibility of still more comprehensive judgments, and points to an ultimate standard.

And, with regard to the variety of theories, it will perhaps be found that misunderstandings, in this as in many other matters, have arisen not so much from upholding erroneous views as from giving exclusive prominence to particular truths. The earlier writers on these subjects appear to have thought it incumbent on them to propound a universal law for the solution of the problems with which they had to deal. The purpose itself may, perhaps, be admitted to prove the general belief in fixed principles of taste; but the incompleteness of the result, as compared with the ambitious aim, is but too commonly apparent, and this may have interfered even with the just claims of many an enlightened investigator. The diversities of opinion are also partly to be attributed to a needless complication of the question: the connection, by many writers, of the ideas of fitness and beauty, as cause and effect, of admiration and love (by Burke), of physical and moral excellence (by Shaftesbury, Winkelmann, and others), though conceivable in an abstract sense, has furnished but indifferent elements for a process of discrimination.

But the greatest practical evil has arisen from the confusion of the principles which are essentially proper to the different arts. The often quoted expression of Cicero — "all the arts which belong to humanity have a certain common bond" — may represent many truisms of the kind, which, in their misapplication, have been the fruitful source either of false theories or of empty generalisations. The temporary ascendency of any one of the fine arts has commonly involved a partial adoption, by the rest, of its methods and aims; this tendency, which must ever recur, requires no incitement, but rather the salutary restrictions which a reference to the characteristics of each art might suggest.

In undertaking an inquiry into this subject, it appeared, therefore, desirable to class the chief propositions according to their direct and definite scope; leaving their connection, interchange, and analogies, as ultimate deductions, to be considered and employed or not, according to their fitness to elucidate more distinct conclusions. It appeared that a subdivision on this principle would render it even more convenient to select for further discussion those branches of the argument which may have received less attention than they deserve. The outline only of such a scheme is here given, but it is believed that the objects and limits of the question have been made apparent.*

* This observation has reference to the entire essay, a portion only of which is here given. — Ed.

The result may at least enable the reader of disquisitions on taste, theories of beauty, and essays on the philosophy of the arts, to form a tolerably clear idea of the department to which every such fuller inquiry belongs, and to estimate its pretensions to completeness accordingly. It will now be asked, to what entire plan is the term "department" to be referred? what should be the principle of arrangement? The answer to this question supplies the groundwork of the analysis which has been sketched in the following pages.

A method sometimes adopted by scientific writers, in classing the sources and forms of knowledge, is especially convenient in defining and arranging the critical inquiries applicable to the arts. The method in question recognises in all impressions extending through sense to thought, the varied attributes and influence of SUBJECT, OBJECT, and MEDIUM. The Subject is the human percipient, the contemplator: the Object is the thing or fact contemplated: the Medium is that which transmits it to the mind.

For the domain of the arts, this definition is sufficiently comprehensive. It may only be necessary to add, that the Medium is partly external; partly, and in a physical sense, belonging to the human percipient. Thus, sounds are conveyed partly by the air, partly by the sense of hearing; but each is a Medium only and altogether passive. This passive character may be sometimes predi-

cable even of higher attributes in the percipient when they fulfil a mediate office.

It may be further remarked that the Medium, whatever be its limits, and even the Subject, may be considered in and for themselves; and, under such circumstances, they assume a relatively *objective* character. The Subject, in its own character, is essentially and alone active.

CHAPTER I.

THE OBJECT.

THE "Object," in the sense above explained, and in reference to the inquiry proposed, may be examined in two points of view, as comprehending, — 1. The characteristics of nature; 2. The characteristics of art.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF NATURE.

The external world, considered in its limited connexion with the fine arts, is chiefly known to us by means of two senses — those of seeing and hearing. To these some have proposed to add the sense of touch *; but the finer perceptions of surface which that organ can convey, are, for all æsthetic purposes, superseded by the perfect exercise of vision. It is also to be understood that in a question concerning the elements of beauty, the impressions referable to the sense of hearing cannot be taken into account; they are, therefore, rarely alluded to in this first chapter. The relation

* A. W. Von Schlegel, Vorlesungen über Theorie und Geschichte der bildenden Künste. Berliner Conversations-Blatt, 1827.

of nature to the formative arts alone is the subject therein proposed.

The qualities which constitute the elements of those arts may be reduced to form, colour, and light, as exhibited in the organic and inorganic world. Of these, form may be said to comprehend the most definite and universally applicable principles, and therefore claims our attention first.

The definition of any given fact in the outward world, in its relation to the sense of sight, is arrived at when that assemblage of qualities which constitutes its distinctness from all other facts is made intelligible. The definition of visible characteristics, with this view, is accomplished, in a great degree, by the comparative anatomist, the botanist, and other votaries of science: such investigators may consequently render more or less service to the artist. But the paths of the two classes of inquirers soon diverge; to the painter such researches are not an end, but a means: on the one hand, his attention is invited by the infinite variety of nature no less than by her order and method; and, on the other, his selection of distinguishing facts has a wider application than the mere purposes of recognition or the mere fidelity of representation. He regards the prominent characteristics of objects not as isolated details, but rather in their arrangements and relations. When, therefore, we here speak of characteristic qualities, in reference to the productions of nature, it is always to be under-

stood that the term comprehends the idea of a whole, and that the prominent qualities are supposed to be considered in their relation to the general appearance. This mode of observation may indeed be considered common to the zoologist and to the artist; but the latter, in one sense, goes further.

He may conclude, for instance, that the visible qualities in an object which are truly *its own*, constitute the relative beauty of that object. The qualities may, or may not, be intrinsically beautiful, but, such as they are, they represent the outward recommendations of that particular example. Attributes which are strictly proper, and which, consequently, are never literally repeated, have a double use: they establish the relative completeness of the individual, and, by their variety and gradation in a more general view, they serve to define the highest examples of character.* Inferior organisations are, therefore, not only æsthetically admissible, but, in a scheme of order, indispensable. Nature aims at distinctness, and attains it not merely by strongly marked differences, but by imperfect ap-

*. "Keiner sey gleich dem andern, doch gleich sey Jeder dem Höchsten!
Wie das zu machen? Es sey Jeder vollendet in sich."
SCHILLER.

Let none be like to another, yet let each resemble the highest!
But how to accomplish this? Say: — let each be complete in himself.

proaches to each leading type, which serve to give it value. It is only by such means that we can measure excellence, the larger differences serving to rectify the results of confined experience: and thus the method of nature appears to have a relation to the mind of the human investigator. The gradations and differences which are presented to us in the visible world render comparison possible; and comparison, with the aid of such materials, necessarily ends in selection and preference, since nature points out with sufficient clearness where she has most completed her intentions.*

To this principle is partly to be referred the unsatisfactory impression which intermediate and almost ambiguous conformations produce — an impression derived, in a great measure, from the mere appearance, and which it is important here to separate from the consideration of habits or origin. We feel, with regard to such examples, that even their best qualities are displayed in greater perfection elsewhere; and, on the same ground, we consider those examples the purest which represent the consummate state of character.

* Those who have looked into these questions may perhaps conclude that the above view, though sufficiently conformable to Locke's philosophy, is less consonant to that of Leibnitz and Kant: but the division of this inquiry into its *objective* and *subjective* elements, renders it possible to keep the conclusions derived from the observation of nature distinct from the doctrine of innate faculties. The latter are, therefore, only slightly alluded to in the above passage.

From the above considerations it will appear that the process of comparison, with a view to the definition of character, supposes a reference to examples, exhibiting a due difference of kind, as well as a difference of degree. Where the difference is too great, a relation is not apparent, and the definition will be too vague; where it is inconsiderable, the definition will not rise to essentials. The following examples will illustrate this.

What may be called the representative or archetypal form in animals, is arrived at not merely by comparing individuals of the same species together, but by comparing them with other creatures which, decidedly, but not radically, differ from them. There can be little doubt that this was the principle which enabled the Greeks so constantly to arrest the great characteristics of human beauty. Their process in this respect is more especially evident in their representations of what were called divinities. Making every allowance for the powers of gifted artists, and the excellence of models, the supernatural, yet beautiful, treatment of the human form, which some of the finest antique statues present, is only to be explained on the principle above noticed. That form, as the most complete development of its class, can only be so elevated by departing (as far as the verge of possible, or rather, conceivable, nature warrants) from the characteristics of inferior animals. It can be so elevated with perfect success, because it is the only instance in which an animal

may slightly overpass its own characteristics without encroaching on, or too closely resembling, those of another.

As regards the study of anatomy, those who hesitate to believe that the ancients were accustomed to dissect human subjects still grant, without difficulty, that they dissected other animals. It appears altogether unreasonable, in the presence of the Greek statues, to refuse to the artists who produced them a thorough knowledge of the structure of the human figure; at the same time it may be admitted that it is precisely the study of comparative anatomy, which would best enable them to define, and therefore to exaggerate when necessary, the human characteristics. Winkelmann supposes that the ancient artists studied the forms of inferior animals with a view to embellish the human figure in another sense, and refers to the heads of Jupiter and Hercules (in which he thought he recognised the characteristics of the lion and the bull), as instances. Sir Charles Bell, who objects to this view, observes in reference to it: "The theory goes to establish the fact, that the artists studied the form of brutes in comparison with that of man; and I hold it to be an inevitable consequence of such a comparison, that they should discover that the perfection of the human form was to be attained, by avoiding what was characteristic of the inferior animals, and increasing the proportions of those features which belong to man." *

* Anatomy and Philosophy of Expression, p. 63.

In fixing the archetypal form of other animals there would be less difficulty. The human being, considered outwardly, can be compared with nothing above him; but every other creature has links on either side connecting it doubly with the rest of the animate world. When compared with these, its own proper and peculiar conformation is more easily defined; but, at the same time, it is less susceptible of exaggeration. The Jupiter of Greek sculpture is more than human*; but the quadruped is the complete type of its class, nothing more.† The ancient artists, from their introducing the horse so constantly in their decorative sculpture, appear to have considered that animal as the most perfect of quadrupeds. The system of comparison above alluded to would tend to this conclusion.

The first outward general quality which we look for in a brute is, that he should possess nothing

* The angle which the line of the profile forms with the horizon has been estimated at 100° in the heads of such statues; in nature the same angle is about 85°. The angle of 90° is not uncommon in the Greek statues. Blumenbach, Camper, White and others, who have given these comparisons, may have been mistaken in their principle of measurement, but the *relative* difference between nature and the antique statues may be considered tolerably correct.

† The author of "The Anatomy of Expression" (p. 125.), justly finds fault with Giulio Romano, for giving a human character to his horses. See also B. R. Haydon, Comparison of the Head of one of the Horses of Lysippus, with the Head of the Elgin Horse, 1818.

strikingly common with the human being. But in order that this impression should be produced, a relation to the human form must still be apparent, otherwise the process of comparison cannot take place. The *non-humanity* must be complete; yet, as the expression intimates, the points of difference must be traceable. A hedge-hog, a sloth, or a bat, would offer a greater contrast, but a contrast with no perceptible relation. An ourang-outang, on the other hand, would be offensively near; and the faculty of comparison (without reference to our human objections) could, in such a case, be hardly called into action. This is the more dwelt on as it may serve as an introduction to the *subjective* discussion, elsewhere undertaken, of the theory of relations — of such, especially, as are adapted to the general range of the human mind, and which, when felt, are an immediate source of agreeable impressions.

The chief difference in the skull of the brute from that of man, is the length and size of the jaw — the organ which, besides the purposes of tearing or masticating food, serves the animal instead of hands. In ordinary instances the area of the brute's face, in consequence of this length of the jaw, is about double that of the cranium; it is almost triple in some cases, and is nearly four times as large in the horse.* On the other hand, the

* Lawrence, Notes to Blumenbach's Manual of Comparative Anatomy. Second edition, 1827, p. 17.

extreme flatness of the muscle of the jaw, which is so striking in the horses of Greek sculpture, marks the graminivorous as opposed to the carnivorous animal. Again, the horse differs from those quadrupeds whose heel touches the ground (the *plantigrada*), and who, in that respect, approach the human being. So, with regard to the hand; with the exception of some of the monkey tribe, no animal besides man has the thumb; the brute tears but cannot properly grasp. Still, the remote resemblance to the hand which more or less divided extremities exhibit, is apparent in most quadrupeds, large and small; but this resemblance disappears entirely in the horse: in the language of comparative anatomists, he is furnished with one finger only at the extremity of each limb, and walks on the nail of that finger. He thus establishes his "non-humanity" beyond all his competitors, yet remains within those limits which render the difference appreciable to the eye.

It was observed that the brute, unlike the human being, has links on either side, which serve to define his character. Thus, if we compare the horse with quadrupeds generally, we find that he wants, in a greater degree than any other, the power of tearing with his extremities; that his means of defence are in his heels, and that, in order to direct them, his eye is prominent sideways. The horse may thus be said to represent the antitype at once to the erect animal, and to the varieties of his im-

mediate class. If, however, he is emphatically the quadruped, the lion represents the carnivorous quadruped, and commands respect for other reasons; his generosity indeed, is, according to naturalists, a fable; but the majesty of his appearance is unquestionable. Recommendations which may be referable to moral attributes or associations are, for the present, purposely omitted; the animation of the courser, without any great power to hurt, is a quality of this description, and is therefore not dwelt on.*

The foregoing prominent instances are intended to show that beauty of form greatly depends on character; and that those examples are most beau-

* The above view is directly opposed to the doctrine, that beauty consists in the "average" form — the theory of Buffier and Reynolds. The example which the latter gives is plausible; he supposes that the average form of the leaves of a tree would be the archetypal form; but when he comes to the human races he finds his principle inapplicable. Indeed, it is plain that if the European standard is the best (which a larger comparison proves), that form would rather lose than gain by being mixed up with the Esquimaux, Calmuc, and other races; the same may be said of the leaves; the best form would gain nothing by being mixed up with the rest. In his discourses, Reynolds frequently observes, that individual forms (that is, all forms) are more or less defective; which none will deny: yet, according to his theory, the average of defects would be excellence. This illustrates further the proposition above stated, that the comparison of differences in degree, which are often infinitely complicated (inasmuch as the points in which one creature excels, another may fall short in), cannot fix essentials. To arrive at the latter, a criterion beyond the minor varieties must be assumed; they then fall into order, and their highest type is definable.

tiful in which the independence and completeness of character are most appreciable. The end or purpose in nature is never to be questioned; but as human beings, we unavoidably prefer those examples which, besides their outward beauty, possess recommendations derived from moral associations. With respect to the process of comparison which has been here illustrated, it is further to be noticed that gradations in nature do not continue long in the same features or qualities, but constantly change their place. This fact, while it involves the necessity of considering characteristics in the mass and the appearance as a whole, shows that it is not possible (as some physiologists have supposed) to establish a scale by following the changes of a single organ.

A second principle which the observation of nature teaches, is, that the characteristic qualities of the object are, generally, also those which fit it for its end.* The proposition is thus qualified, because it cannot be at present affirmed that this correspondence is universally apparent, even to scientific observers; but the increasing knowledge of nature is constantly opening up new facts, by means of which zoologists are enabled, more and more, to

* It is not necessary to infer, with Camper and others, that beauty, whether relative or absolute, is the result of such fitness: the two attributes, fitness and beauty, are, in nature, merely correlative.

trace the connection between the most apparently useless organs and the wants of the creature to which they belong. Whenever these investigators are sufficiently acquainted with the habits of a creature, they find that the form announces those habits: so that, when the structure alone is known, as in the case of fossil remains, the corresponding habits can, to a great extent, be described.

The imitation of nature, in the largest sense, is in no respect more difficult than in the adaptation of this principle to what may be called a new creation — such as architecture. It is always desirable that the purpose of a work of this class should be intelligible from its form; it is, at least, essential that, when that purpose is known, the form should not contradict it. This correspondence of fitness with character is the great problem of creative art, as it is a general excellence in nature. Where the two requisites cannot be combined in a perfect manner, the human artist has to choose which of the two shall predominate. It may be remarked that in such cases the Greeks commonly preferred character to fitness; the genius of the moderns prefers fitness to character. The end proposed, in this indirect imitation of nature, is not that useful things shall be abstractedly and absolutely beautiful, but only that they shall express their purpose, and appear what they are: they then cannot fail to be relatively beautiful. This question will be more fully con-

sidered in the next division of the subject — the characteristics of art.

We now come to a higher criterion by means of which the relative beauty, hitherto considered, in the works of nature, and consequently in those of imitative art, may be tested.

Life is pre-eminently an element of beauty. The word presents at once to the imagination the ideas of movement, of energy, and of bloom; the fact itself constitutes the greatest and most admirable attribute of nature. The arts may be said to derive their chief interest and effect directly or indirectly from this source, and it will therefore be desirable to trace its connexion with the world which they reproduce.

The visible effects of life are observable in movement, form, and colour: of these, form again invites our attention more especially, as exhibiting the most definite results. What, then, in reference to this attribute, are the chief phenomena of life? What are its visible indications? We are first aware that it is a force acting in opposition to certain other forces, which latter in the end overcome it and destroy the machinery which it animated.* The presence of this vital energy distinguishes what are called organic bodies. The external forces, such as attraction, chemical combination, heat, electricity, &c., suffice, in the order of nature,

* Cuvier, Leçons d'Anatomie Comparée.

to form, as well as to destroy, inorganic bodies, many of which consist in mere molecular aggregation; but life, whether on the minutest or the largest scale, proceeds only from life.* We next observe that the resistance to the outward forces is maintained, in animals, by absorption, respiration, and digestion; in vegetables, by the two former alone.† Up to a certain point this nourishment has the effect of developing the structure and force of the creature; but having attained and passed its acmé of vitality, it offers less and less resistance to the external forces.

Thus (if we regard the outward energies as a single principle), a living form, considered merely as such, is the arena where two contending forces dispute the victory, and is also the index of their alternate superiority. If we suppose the passive substance to be represented by a flexible line, that line would exhibit the effects of the opposition above described quite intelligibly. Two contrasting forces, sometimes nearly balanced, at others exercising an unequal but never sudden stress, would necessarily produce alternating and varying curves; and the maximum of partial stress which would take place during the brief ascendency of one of the forces would be apparent in a cor-

* Cuvier, Ibid. Compare Duméril, Élémens des Sciences Naturelles.

† Botanists now hesitate to exclude digestion from the vegetable functions. Compare Lindley, Vegetable Kingdom.

responding maximum of curvature, in reference to the entire line. This figurative view is borne out by fact in cases where less complicated operations permit the observation. The external forces of nature are always more or less opposed, not only to life, but to each other; these antagonising impulses are the immediate, appreciable, and, in some cases, even controllable causes of a variety of graceful forms, similar to those that have even now been supposed. Attraction is the chief principle which produces these effects, from the bend of the feather to the path of the planet. In a statement which requires no extreme scientific accuracy of expression, such movements and curves might be said to indicate the life of inorganic nature. In fact, the ebb and flow of the ocean, and the ceaseless alternations which sustain the freshness of the universe, have been often compared to the pulsations of vitality; by some of the ancients the energies were even believed to be identical. *

A variously undulating curve may therefore be proposed as a visible type of life: such a form is constantly found in nature as the indication and concomitant of life itself. It was this which Hogarth

* The principle of regularity is most observable in nature in the changes of time: its appearance in form will be noticed hereafter. It may be remarked, that the circulation of the blood is not even confined, as Cuvier supposed, to vertebrate animals; it is now known to take place in *insecta*. Compare Owen, Hunterian Lectures, vol. i. p. 222.

detected in various examples, without tracing it to its source. His illustrations are often excellent, but the type itself which he adopted was singularly unfortunate. His "line of beauty" constantly repeats itself, and is therefore devoid of variety or elasticity, the never-failing accompaniments of perfect vitality. The wave — often selected as an ornamental type by the ancients — beginning with a scarcely perceptible inflexion and culminating in a volute; or the flame — a pyramid* or cone bounded by ever mutable curves — would have been more adapted to his purpose. The perpetual change which contrasting forces produce on flexible forms is well exemplified in the movements of the serpent — the emblem of life throughout the pagan world.†

* "Satan — Springs upward like a pyramid of fire." Par. Lost, B. ii.

† Plutarch (de Iside et Osiride), perhaps repeating the common opinion of the ancients, explains this from the fact that the serpent casts its skin frequently, thus appearing to be renovated. A more obvious reason, though still requiring explanation, is the very ancient identity, in the Semitic languages, of the words equivalent to serpent (perhaps also worm) and life. The frequent use of the symbol in ancient art and mythology is well known. The attribute of Esculapius, the restorer of life, is a serpent; the serpent on the trunk which supports the Apollo is best explained as characterising the sun, the giver of life. Minerva feeding a serpent typifies the spirit of the universe nourishing the vital energies of nature. In Egypt we find the symbol in architecture: the door of every temple is ornamented with a device consisting of a globe (the sun?) whence issue serpents, the whole finishing with wings; this might have been intended to represent, in the pagan sense,

The curves that have been alluded to are distinguished from all those, however fit for the creative arts, which are described or evolved according to a given and uninterrupted law; for the varieties of line which are the result of growth, of pulsation, of vital tension or expansion, are incalculable from any given portion of such line. Hence, although correctness of imitation alone can seize the character of living forms, it is important to remember what they are *not:* whenever a line, supposed to be endowed with life of any kind, approaches a geometric or regular curve, we may conclude that it is false. An approach to the straight line, serving by its rigidity to give value to the inflected portions, is far more true to nature; but no apparent angle is to be detected in the outline of the healthy living form.

From the above definition of the "line of beauty" a more generally applicable conclusion is derived. The line which has no two points of inflexion exactly alike necessarily presents a principal portion of nearly unvarying continuity, as regards its extent, and a maximum of elevation or depression, as regards its direction (the only attributes it possesses); so that, however varied, it exhibits both wholly and partially the principle of

the giver of life, life, and motion. Life, as the chief natural good, was the essence of the pagan religion; and the connection between that religion and the principle of beauty in ancient art is thus intelligible.

greater and less, of chief and subordinate qualities. This principle, the source both of nature's unceasing novelty and unity, and the secret of that repose which the eye requires, is applicable to all works of art, creative as well as imitative, and this is the chief sense in which the indirect imitation of nature is to be understood.* The ideas of gradation and culmination are thus essential elements of art and of beauty; and it will easily be seen that, in the instance given, they are still referable to the abstract notion of character; for both the longest portion of nearly undeviating continuity in a line, and the acmé of elevation in the whole curve, are only conspicuous because they have a character of their own, with the impression of which nothing interferes.

Two general principles have now been arrived at by means of which opinions respecting beauty of

* "The same right judgment which proscribes two equal lights forbids any two objects to be introduced of equal magnitude or force, so as to appear to be competitors for the attention of the spectator. This is common; but I do not think it quite so common to extend the rule so far as it ought to be extended; even in colours, whether of the warm or cold kind, there should be one of each which should be apparently principal, and predominate over the rest. It must be observed even in drapery; two folds of the same drapery must not be of equal magnitude." — Reynolds, *Notes to Du Fresnoy.*

The necessary contradiction of the above principle in architecture, where forms are exactly repeated, will be considered hereafter.

form may be estimated.* The first is, the conformity of the creature to its archetypal or normal structure. The second and more largely applicable criterion is, the evidence or indication of life (not necessarily accompanied by motion) which forms may present. All the productions of nature are beautiful: the zoologist or the painter who studies any single example finds it to be a world in itself, and discovers in each, as in all, not only the most perfect adaptation of means to ends, but the most picturesque and graceful arrangements. Our ordinary impressions, however, are more rapid and comparative, and the apparent absence or imperfect evidence of life (in the sense above explained), in some creatures, appears to be a chief reason why we do not consider such examples as pre-eminently beautiful. Most of us, and especially artists, are reluctant to approach the criticism of nature. It would, indeed, be easy to select specimens of creatures which, from associations of dread or disgust, would be universally admitted to be repulsive; but this would not be consistent with the abstract principles here attempted to be illustrated. The few examples given are purposely chosen without reference to such impressions; some, indeed, though not expressive of life, are beautiful in our eyes from other causes.

* The remaining and minor principle — the agreement of character and fitness — is most applicable, as already observed, to works of creative art; it is therefore not further alluded to at present.

The hide of the rhinoceros may be admired for its fitness; but as it scarcely indicates vitality, it is deemed less beautiful than a skin which exhibits the mutable effects of muscular elasticity. The woolly, shaggy coverings of various animals, however useful, and often agreeable to the eye, are scarcely expressive of life under ordinary circumstances. The plumage of the denizens of air, however beautiful in itself, is too dense to exhibit the movements of the living surface underneath: this is compensated, in some instances, by graceful general forms, which their clothing does not at all conceal. The indurated coverings and appendages of some creatures are unchangeable; though, in many, especially on a minute scale, the absence of apparent vitality is compensated by a more regular development of form or colour. In all such cases, the beauty, such as it is, of the skin, plumage, horn, or shell, is more or less independent of life, and may be said to be equally striking apart from the animal. Again, when the living surface, though covered only by a pellicle, exhibits no variety, no qualities of life independent of mere motion, nor even the compensating, though inferior recommendation, of an architectural symmetry, the creature may be consistently classed with the less beautiful examples. So with regard to structure; the legs of birds, necessarily light and slender to diminish their weight, are, in their general form, inexpressive of vitality; this is

especially remarkable in the long, stem-like limbs of the *grallæ*—the stork, ibis, and flamingo. The apparent approach to an inferior organisation is often observable on a large scale: the limbs of the elephant and of some other quadrupeds, when motionless, resemble inanimate substances. A similar departure from general character in the vegetable world affects the mind disagreeably, apart from more accidental associations: trees or plants which, from their age or the peculiarity of their growth, exhibit the rugged angularity of still more sluggish substances, or approach the uniform development that sometimes characterises inorganic productions, are less beautiful than those which retain the indications of their origin and express their general organic nature.*

In these instances, imperfect indications of life are also imperfect indications of character—of that general character, namely, which belongs to the organic world. It was before remarked that the characteristic qualities of an object constitute the relative beauty of that object, and this holds true in a higher sense in proportion to the excellence of the attribute. But although the examples above pointed out may be deficient in beauty, *inasmuch* as they fail in a most essential quality, it by no means follows that they may not be agreeable from other compensating causes. Their inferior, relative beauty, depending on their own individual

* Compare Cicognara, Del Bello, Firenze, 1808, Ragion. primo.

or class characteristics, may be passed over, as its claims have been already considered. The elephant, with his objectionable legs and inexpressive hide, may still be supposed to be a very normal specimen, and may be interesting accordingly. But there are more positive sources of agreeable impressions to be recognised in many objects of the description above alluded to, still independent of accidental associations.

In regard to birds, for example, the graceful forms which they may sometimes want in certain portions of their mere structure, are still described (and though momentarily most impressively) by their movements in air. Their march on terra firma may be admitted to be ungainly; but many that are restricted in their powers of flight, assert their pretensions to grace by the freedom of their action, especially observable in their flexible necks, when on the liquid element. Again, there are causes of graceful movements and forms, which we have ventured to call the life of inorganic nature; these, by their operation on flexible substances, produce appearances similar to those of life. The longer plumage of birds may bend, the hair and manes of some animals may wave or curl independent of vitality, since the effects exist apart from it. The beauty of colours also is, or may be, independent of life; for we find the productions of the inorganic world, and even the most inert substances, often brilliant in their hues. Light

is another cause, when, besides its ordinary and universal office, it produces resplendent effects on the glossy coats of quadrupeds or on plumage.

As observed at the outset, the associations derived from the experience of the other senses, and even of the sense of hearing, are purposely omitted in this examination of the abstract question, since the beautiful has relation to the organ of sight alone; but they are by no means to be left out of the account in tracing the causes of agreeable emotions generally. Indeed, although the sources of such impressions are thus varied and complicated throughout nature, the distribution does not affect the elements of beauty: we recognise only in that distribution a principle of compensation which enhances the variety of nature's works, and multiplies their attractions in our eyes.*

The claims of the different races of human beings in regard to external recommendations, may be partly estimated by the two standards before adverted to. The first test — conformity

* "Though richest hues the peacock's plumes adorn,
Yet horror screams from his discordant throat.
Rise, sons of harmony, and hail the morn,
While warbling larks on russet pinions float."

Beattie, Minstrel.

The same principle of compensation, or distribution of interest in human eyes, appears to exist in lower forms of organisation. Insects (says Cuvier) have no voice; but some produce sounds by the action of their wings, or, like the cricket, by other means. The butterfly tribe are mute; but the unsightly beetle is known to every poet by his twilight song.

to the archetypal structure, as defined by a comparison with, and departure from, the quadruped—is decidedly favourable to the European. The second—the evidence of life—still awards the palm to the European; and, as soon as it is admitted by Negro philosophers, may be considered conclusive. According to that criterion, what is called the white skin is more beautiful than the black, because it more readily exhibits indications of life and indications of emotion. The finer varieties of light and shade are more apparent on a light surface than on a dark one; and delicate mantlings of colour, whether the result of action or passion, are more perceptible on it for the same reason. Those who are familiar with the black races are well aware that their skin does exhibit changes, from exertion and from the affections of the mind; but the question is one of degree only, and it is to be remembered that by the term "white" we are not necessarily to understand the palest examples (for on such the effect of strong light is rather to efface the markings), but rather the warmer hue which is common in the south of Europe.

The abstract idea of form—circumscribed space—supposes such extent to be bounded either by straight or curved lines, or by both. The nature of the curves, which are appropriated to the expression of life, have been already considered. The forms, which are entirely bounded by straight lines, occur only in the inorganic world. The

principle of the straight line — equality and immutability — is the antithesis to vital elasticity; and thus, in the largest comparison of the works of nature, it gives value to the forms of life. Unchangeable in itself, it can only serve to build up substances by means of angles, expressing rather the juxtaposition than the organic union of different elements. Forms which combine regularity and angularity, such as we find in crystals, may be said to characterise the chief works of human creation *, which, though powerless to approach the essentials of life (except in the imitation proposed by the formative arts), can still adopt the principle of order.

The symmetrical arrangement of the limbs, which we find in examples of the higher development of life, is essential to movement. An unequal number of legs could only produce lameness, "and there being two sides in the moving organs, there are necessarily two in the sensitive organs, which are mere portions of the same system." † The attention is diverted in nature from this repetition of the limbs by their contrasted arrangement, and by the position of the head; but the equality disappears with the first indication of that movement for which it exists; and, so far from being un-

* Compare A. W. Von Schlegel, Vorlesungen, &c., before quoted.

† Walker on Beauty, London, 1836. This writer, in reference to the point here noticed, successfully refutes Payne Knight, who is unable to see why symmetry should exist in animals and not in trees.

pleasant, it excites an agreeable feeling of regularity as a relief to the intricate forms which so complicated a machine, when put in action, can present. With the exception of some rudimentary organs *, this symmetry stops, in the higher examples of organic forms, where it no longer serves the purposes of locomotion; but in less perfect organisations, generally on a small scale, it is often independent of such use, and combines the fuller regularity of some inorganic productions with the indications of inferior life. This kind of symmetry is found among zoophytes † and in flowers; in quadrupeds, when it appears at all, the principle is confined to the arrangement of their colours, and does not affect their structure. On the whole it appears that the method of nature, in the great contrast between the organic and inorganic, corresponds with the system before noticed, in considering the separation of classes of animals: the wide diversities are reconciled by an indirect and varied gradation. The march is, on the whole,

* The rudimentary forms which occur in animals, are supposed by Cuvier to indicate, in some cases, the tendency of nature to connect different genera. It was remarked by an intelligent observer, that they seem to be left by nature to keep up a *right of way*.

† "All the *Echini* are admirable for the regular and beautiful pattern in which, as in a tesselated pavement, the numerous calcareous pieces composing their globular crust are arranged." — Owen, *Hunterian Lectures*, vol. i. p. 117.

The regularity of some *Stelleridæ* is no less remarkable.

constant, but not always observed in the same qualities or features; whence an inexhaustible variety presents itself to our view. It is also to be observed, that the important changes are, in many cases, distinguished by a greater interval; so that the gradation cannot be said to be literally uninterrupted.

Colours, viewed under the effects of ordinary light and atmosphere, may be considered according to the same general principles. It is first to be observed, that, like forms, they may or may not be characteristic, and that no object would be improved by means, however intrinsically agreeable, which are never its own. Next, as to the idea of life: creatures exhibit the hues with which nature has clothed them in greatest brilliancy during the period of consummate life and health. Bright red, which by universal consent represents the idea of life (perhaps from its identity with the hue of the blood) is the colour which most stimulates the organ of sight. The colours of flowers, in like manner, indicate, or rather are, the acmé of their vitality.

In a question concerning beauty, nature can only be consulted in reference to human beings; but it must not be forgotten that all creatures endowed with sight are assisted by colours in distinguishing objects for physical purposes; for example, carnivorous animals may be supposed to discern their prey from afar by its means; in some cases even

the comparative absence of colour protects the weaker from the stronger by its indistinctness.

Considered intrinsically, the physically stimulating effect of colours fits them for a high office. The varieties of forms, aided by all the relief which light and shade can give, would be insufficient to enable us to discern objects clearly without the aid of colour. It appears that, throughout nature, colour serves this purpose only; and, if so, it may be said to approach the abstract idea of distinctness: there cannot be a better ground for considering it the chief auxiliary of beauty. As a source of distinctness this adjunct gives importance to objects in nature as it does in art; yet, in examining the result, we should consider not merely its distribution among objects, but its relation to human vision, — for the question is, how far our attention is attracted by it. In many cases, for example in the brilliancy of glowing skies and the splendour of light, the force of the impression does agree with the excellence of the objects and their associations. But innumerable instances might be adduced from the animate and inanimate world, where the emphasis of colour is lavished on things to us comparatively indifferent. On this point it is to be remarked, that the vivacity of tints, in flowers, birds, and insects for example, is generally unobtrusive, either from the minuteness of the objects, their short duration, or their rapid movement; and that in climates where such hues occur on a

larger scale they are more sustained throughout nature, so that the eye is not startled by them; they are, under such circumstances, far less conspicuous than when they are transported to a more monotonous region.

But while this element of distinctness is not obtrusive, while it gives no undue importance to particular facts in creation, and while it does not distract our attention by multiplying details, its absolute beauty serves an interesting purpose in a more general sense. That purpose has been often acknowledged by writers who have given their attention to higher subjects than taste: it appears reasonable to conclude, and our grateful feelings more than confirm the inference, that there are facts in nature which, besides their connexion with her ordinary economy, have an especial reference to human faculties and sympathies. The song of birds, the bloom of plants, the hues of morning and evening, kindle emotions of admiration and hope, and at once establish the existence of an æsthetic sense independent of adventitious associations, since they speak the same intelligible language to the learned and the unlearned, and to all races of mankind. To this question we shall return in treating of the *subjective* elements of taste.

Light may be considered as the representative of an important element of beauty everywhere traceable in nature; and it is the more worthy of attention since the fine and scarcely perceptible modifications

which it exhibits may serve to correct an exaggerated stress on distinctness of character. As the type of gradation, it embodies and illustrates the principle that no creature, no form, no colour stands alone in nature; but that every such result is what it is by means of a chain of degrees attesting either its relative or absolute excellence. Light is, therefore, the abstract idea of that "greater and less" which has before been illustrated in reference to organic form. It is the antithesis to colour, though its source. Colours, unbroken by the varieties of light, differ in kind rather than in degree: they owe their harmony to gradation, and thus only become adapted to the completeness of nature. The effect of light on forms is the illustration and epitome of the same principle. The boundary is lost and found, and is commonly most relieved where it is most significant. The acmé of splendour is one; for if repeated in brilliancy, it is smaller in mass. The general appearance teaches that unvaried sharpness, or unvaried softness, are alike untrue; that equal distinctness is, in its ultimate impression, indistinctness; and that where all is salient, the prominent fact is still wanting.

We have now briefly considered the principal æsthetic attributes of the organic and inorganic world: we have traced the influence of two leading principles of beauty—the visible evidence of character in form, and the visible evidence of the higher

character of life: we have endeavoured to separate these from other auxiliary sources of agreeable impressions, such as the effect of colours and the influences derived from the memory of the other senses. Lastly, all these elements have been kept independent of accidental and remote associations, since a reference to such sources of interest could only serve to complicate the question and render the interpretation of nature less possible.

A third criterion remains: it is applicable to human beings and to them only. Human beauty is then most complete, when it not only conforms to the archetypal standard of its species, when it not only exhibits in greatest perfection the attributes of life, but when it most bears the impress of MIND, controlling and spiritualising both.

It is here that Greek art is found wanting: it is, indeed, eminently expressive of mind, but not of mind in its truest and holiest relation. Its classifying system, applied to the animate creation, was all-sufficient to define the outward human being (inasmuch as that form can only be compared with inferior organisations), but the definition of the moral attributes required a criterion which nature could not supply. Still, it must be admitted that Greek art is eminently dignified and graceful, and that the high privilege of its intelligible language is seldom abused. The chief elements of mere beauty—the truly characteristic form, and the

fullness of life—are perfectly comprehended and expressed in it; they were arrested at the culminating point and fixed in marble to represent the immortals.* The majestic mien and aspect, the self-command, whether in gentle or in rapid action, the grace and decorum of the sex, are all comprehended in the definition of the human character which nature supplied †; but soul is wanting; the true attributes of the moral being are never approached. It may be questioned whether the sculpture of the Greeks was not confined in its aim almost as much by the nature of the art as by the conditions of paganism. As it was, the ancients seem to have felt the difficulty of combining (in permanent representation) ideas of suffering with those of beauty and physical power; and they generally contrived to restrict the expression of such ideas to the forms of early youth or of age. But, if we may judge from the descriptions of subjects and from inferior works which remain, they observed the same principles in painting; and this tends to show that they had not fully

* Schelling, Über das Verhältniss der bildenden Künste zu der Natur. München, 1807.

† See Grüneisen, Über das Sittliche der bildenden Kunst bei den Griechen. Leipzig, 1833. Compare Jacobs (Vermischte Schriften, Leipzig, 1829), Über die Erziehung der Hellenen zur Sittlichkeit, and, Die Hellenische Frauen. These writers and Böttiger take a middle course between the flattering descriptions of Barthélemy and the prejudiced views of De Pauw. The moral essence of Greek art is to be sought chiefly in those works which adorned temples and public buildings.

comprehended or developed the powers of that art. The less restricted means, and therefore less exclusively abstract treatment of form, which painting, as compared with sculpture, employs, its variety and individuality of character, its command of colour and light as vehicles of expression, and its "power of dealing with the eyes,"* constitute a language which leaves it free to assert the claims of the moral human being consistently with the full use of the best attributes of art. It was this high privilege which, during the great epochs of its modern culture, enabled painting more sensibly to define the relation which in all ages has been vaguely felt to exist between the beauties of nature and the moral government of the universe; for it was not till that moral order had been fully revealed and its possible connexion with finite conditions ratified, that the relation could be distinctly felt.

The conclusion which the foregoing considerations appear to warrant may be now briefly stated as follows: CHARACTER IS RELATIVE BEAUTY: LIFE IS THE HIGHEST CHARACTER: MIND IS THE HIGHEST LIFE.

The first of these positions comprehends all nature. Nothing is improved by departing from its character: abnormal peculiarities are defects in rocks and mountains, as well as in organised struc-

* Sir Edmund Head, Preface to the Translation of Kugler's Handbook of the History of Painting, part ii.

tures. It is scarcely possible for any fact in creation to depart from its own qualities without resembling, though, of course, imperfectly resembling, something else, and thus tending at once to confusion and incompleteness.

And here an important æsthetic element may be noticed, though it strictly belongs to the *subjective* department of this inquiry. We find that a partial and passing resemblance of things to what they are not, is, within certain limits, and when we are conscious of the illusion, often a source of agreeable emotions. The resemblance of clouds to mountains, of rocks to romantic buildings, of bending corn to waves, of sighing winds to voices, may be said to contain the germs of poetry.* As regards the eye, appearances of this kind are generally the effect of distance, of imperfect light, or of an imperfect medium. Even under such circumstances we are pleased only with ambiguity, not with literal misrepresentation. In painting, the employment of such materials (which, as Cobbett said of metaphors, are edge-tools) is the province of no ordinary inventor, and no inexperienced workman: in sculpture they have no place.†

* Compare Alison, Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste, Edinburgh, 1817; and the article Beauty (Lord Jeffrey) in the Encyclopædia Britannica.

† This conclusion is not invalidated by the mixed forms, such as Centaurs, &c., of Greek sculpture. The ambiguity above referred to is the temporary *substitution* of one idea for another,

This points out the difference between such "tricks of strong imagination" and the ideal in art. The latter is only a larger and choicer reality; it changes nature in degree but not in kind; it transfigures, but does not transform: it is founded, as shown in the preceding pages, on the evidence of character and the higher indications of life — both elements of distinctness, not of confusion: the first separating the individual, and subsequently the class, from all others; the second separating the organic from the inorganic, and ultimately, the intellectual-organic from even the highest mere vitality.

On the other hand, the confusion of appearances begins when vision is imperfectly addressed, and imagination takes its place. The result, it is repeated, is agreeable only when we are aware of the deception — when we make it for ourselves. The process, whatever may suggest it, is, therefore, human creation, and may be carried on, from the hints derived from without, in the imagination alone: hence, it is a main element of poetry, and

not their permanent *juxtaposition*. The imagination consents to the mixture of forms, in the latter sense, if they are agreeable. The Centaur, it may be remarked, is only satisfactory when the human portion, preserving the upright position, agrees with the ordinary bend of the horse's neck. There are instances in sculpture where this is not observed, and where the conformation at once degenerates to a monster. On the same principle the eye no longer tolerates a Triton, when the piscine portion contradicts the bend of the knees.

shows that this art, essentially, as well as in its form, belongs rather to the creative than to the imitative class.

So with regard to the second criterion before mentioned — the indications of life — there is no saying where the recognition of this source of agreeable impressions is to stop. We have seen that there is a pervading force in nature producing effects resembling those of organic life, and that such effects are observable in movements as well as in forms.

Again, although the attributes of mind are exclusively human, they, too, have in some degree, their reflections in other departments of creation. The influence of associations, even when founded on the ordinary experience of nature only, is almost unlimited. Dignity and grace, as indications of mental freedom and moral harmony, are attributes of the highest human beauty; but a healthy organisation and the sense of physical power may be adequate to produce effects, at least resembling them, in inferior animals. We are accustomed to attribute dignity to the still lion, and grace to the movements of various creatures. The imagination does not stop here, but, as our ordinary language proves, invests all nature, whether in repose or in action, with human qualities and passions.

The influence of resemblances and of voluntary illusion has been adverted to in this place in order

distinctly to separate the conclusions which have been suggested by an analysis of the real, from the doctrine of associations; for that theory, however important and true in its just relation to questions of taste, should not be suffered to interfere with the direct *objective* interpretation of nature. Its inadequacy to solve certain other difficulties will be noticed elsewhere.

The influence of the gradually ascending permanent tests before examined may serve to explain the seeming paradox that objects are seldom recognised by their essential qualities.* Indeed this is true, in a certain sense, universally; for the more essential physical characteristics which distinguish animals from each other are internal, while accidental and, to our limited knowledge, useless appendages, increase towards the exterior.† It is, however, with the exterior only that we have to do in investigating the question of beauty. It is first evident that the perfection of life, or the state which most nearly approaches it, is of short duration, and that, as regards each individual, it occurs but once; consequently the period of bloom could with no propriety be called an average state. So with regard to the outward indications of mind; the sunny glances of thought and feeling are brief, the nights

* See this important subject clearly and eloquently treated by the author of "Modern Painters" (third edition), vol. i. p. 55.

† Cuvier, Leçons, &c. before quoted.

of apathy long, and the most frequent expression in an individual would by no means be the best. The criterion of the zoologist might, for these reasons, fail to satisfy the æsthetic inquirer: in the eyes of the latter the general principle—that any given production in nature is then most beautiful when the qualities which it exhibits are most its own—is modified and exalted by the successive application of the higher tests above adverted to. It is plain that we have a right to suppose a bloom of mind as well as an acmé of vitality; they may exist together, but with this difference—that the flower of earthly existence precedes decay and extinction, while the highest development of the inward life is the earnest of immortality.

To conclude; it appears that the æsthetic relation between the works of nature and the human mind subsists chiefly by means of gradations in the one and the faculty of comparison in the other; the mental power of discrimination being assisted by corresponding powers in the organs of sensation. The imperfections in nature are therefore necessary to the distinction of her excellencies, and the same principle appears to comprehend even the painful facts which are sometimes presented to our notice.* The comparison may be simultaneous, as in regard to objects or appearances co-existing in space; or it may be the result of acts of memory, as in regard to effects presented in succession and at greater or

* John, ix. 2, 3.

less intervals of time. The consequence of an interpretation of nature, with the aid of such materials and faculties, uninfluenced by adventitious and sometimes contradictory associations, probably would be, that we should regard those forms and appearances as the most beautiful which are the highest types of their respective classes, and which present the most consummate distinctness of character (in the various applications of that term before explained), as compared with other examples. In the analysis of more immediate agreeable impressions, we should perhaps trace the emotion to a comparison forced, as it were, on the senses and the mind by the power or brilliancy of contrast—as in the effects of magnitude, of colours, and of vivid light—and we should recognise in such effects a more direct interference, so to speak, on the part of nature, with our mental habits.

In the ordinary comparison of natural objects the attributes last referred to may be considered as auxiliaries only; in general, they appear to be distributed throughout the visible world to compensate the apparent absence of vitality or other imperfections in form, and to invite attention where other sources of interest are wanting. In the highest æsthetic sense impressions of sublimity are equivalent to those of beauty; and hence, not only the vivacity of colour and of light, but vast magnitude or sometimes even extreme minuteness (though the latter does not come within the range of imitative

art) can, by an immediate exercise of the faculty of comparison, excite the feeling of admiration. The emotion is caused not merely by the aspect of inanimate nature, as in the grandeur of mountains, the far-spreading horizon, or the majestic ocean, but by the giant forms of animals and the wonders of the microscope. With regard to colours, besides their distribution, above adverted to, on what seems to be a principle of compensation, they emphatically mark with beauty the reproduction of the vegetable world. Together with light, they enhance the enjoyment of those hours and seasons which may be called the holiday of nature: when the splendour of the dawn or of the close of day, seems to invite the attention of human beings, in their intervals of leisure, before or after their labours; or when nature, decked in her best, in the genial periods of the year, attracts the observation of her human admirers, who are then most in her presence. But the attributes of magnitude, colours, and light are perhaps more impressive when they appear almost disengaged from form; when contrast and gradation are exhibited in their absolute force and beauty: such are the more transcendant and striking effects of the atmosphere and the heavens, when the brilliancy and gradation of light, the magic of colours, and the awful impression of boundless space are combined.

On the whole, therefore, it appears, first, that the process of comparison, however rapid may be

its operations, is essential to the appreciation of beauty: and, secondly, that beauty, in all its highest forms, is calculated to impress on human beings the belief in a perfection greater than this world contains. The almost unconscious mental acts which, assisted by memory, may accompany the exercise of vision, thus constitute the subjective elements of æsthetic perception — a faculty connecting the world of sight with that of thought by an idea of excellence derived from both, and therefore fitted to harmonise, not only with that completeness in nature in which character resides, but also with those higher associations which confer expression on her works through "the evidence of things not seen."

THE END.

LONDON:
SPOTTISWOODE and SHAW,
New-street-Square.

By the same Author, in 8vo., price 16s.,

MATERIALS

FOR

A HISTORY OF OIL PAINTING.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"It is seldom, indeed, that such qualifications for writing on the history of painting meet in the same person, or that practical excellence and ardent love for his own art are seconded as in this case, by the capacity for acquiring knowledge, and communicating it in an agreeable form. The title of Mr. Eastlake's book is singularly modest; more information is to be found in his 'Materials for a History of Oil Painting' than is generally comprised in works with much more pompous denominations." — *Edinburgh Review.*

"The conscientious view he has taken of the duties of his office, and his entire faithfulness in discharging them, have led to results of a most beneficial character, — beneficial to artists, and to the arts as a perpetuity. His highly valuable work is the real boon, and will be the lasting proof of his faithful service." — *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine.*

"We cannot but congratulate the artist on the good service they have received in the collection of these valuable practical details — the public, on the acquisition, through this book, of an important contribution to a real history of art; and Mr. Eastlake himself, on the honour that must accrue to him, for the performance of such public services." — *Dublin University Magazine.*

"The volume is filled with discoveries and details of inappreciable importance to the painter, set forth in a style both scholarlike and plain." — *Examiner.*

"Mr. Eastlake's volume is one of extensive and minute research and displays the author's erudition. It stands in such a light to the artist as the Pharmacopœia does to the medical man; and will necessarily be in the possession of every student." — *Athenæum.*

"This important work, just issued from the press by its accomplished Author, is another proof of the indomitable love of the art

which is characteristic of its most able professors. Nothing else could have induced so indefatigable and extensive a research amid a mass of disjointed and disputed documentary evidence. At the present time Mr. Eastlake's book comes forth as a good gift to all living artists. He has sacrificed time and repose, and encountered an immensity of labour for his brethren in art. He has pointed out the means by which they may belong to the history of the age. If some are still found to victimise their representations and their works by fanciful nostrums and ignorant combinations of discordant agents, to such the existence of this book will attach a stigma richly merited and well placed. The book is purely technical, and although of utility only to the practitioner, yet it embodies a large fund of interesting information to every lover of the art, as well as to the antiquary." — *Art Union.*

"Mr. Eastlake has evidently bestowed much research and scholarly attainment in the investigation of his subject; he writes clearly, and indeed elegantly, and no one, be he amateur or artist, at all impelled with a regard for the progress of high art, and imbued with a sense of its true dignity and importance, will rise from a perusal of its pages uninformed on many essential points, and unimpressed with the extreme value and utility of Mr. Eastlake's well directed labours." — *The Magazine of Science.*

"From the invention of oil painting to this day, Mr. Eastlake's volume carefully examines and states every ascertainable particular, and fairly settles questions of priority and merit. The fourteenth century, with its fresco and wax painting, the first attempts in oils, and the many processes adopted in their manifestation and application, the substances used for them and for varnishes, and, in short, the entire progress of the art illustrated by some curious references to MSS. and authorities little known, are most lucidly stated; and, in our opinion, do not leave a want on the subject to be sought and filled by living or future artists. To them we need scarcely recommend it as a *vade-mecum.*" — *Literary Gazette.*

"Mr. Eastlake's book is crowded with minute facts, collected with infinite research, and so disposed as to illustrate principles of the highest importance in the practice of genuine art. The true artist will find matter to engage his serious attention in every page; and if we do not greatly err, there will be dated from the appearance of this book a great though gradual improvement in all that relates to that mechanical practice of the art, on which, however humbly it may be ranked, must depend the just and beautiful expression of the painter's thoughts, and on which, as a sure foundation, must stand the structure of his fame." — *Britannia.*

LONDON: LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS.

00080192

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 17 February, 2016